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JOSEPH AND BENJAMIN:

A

SERIES OF LETTERS

ON THE

CONTROVERSY

BETWEEN

JEWS AND CHRISTIANS:

COMPRISING

THE MOST IMPORTANT DOCTRINES

OF THE

CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

BY JOSEPH SAMUEL C. F. FREY,

AUTHOR OF A HEBREW GRAMMAR, A HEBREW, LATIN, AND ENGLISH DICTIONARY,

AND EDITOR OF VANDER HOOGHT'S HEBREW BIBLE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

.....

"These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God."—JOHN.

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CONTENTS OF VOL. II.

PART I. EXALTATION OF THE MESSIAH.

Page.

LETTER I.—Introduction, ... 9
Necessity of Christ's exaltation. It has respect to his divine and human nature; to his body, soul, and person; and his mediatorial office; it includes power over all creatures.

LETTER II.—Resurrection of Christ, ... 19
It was typified and predicted in the Old Testament, and foretold by Christ. Objections answered.

LETTER III.—The subject continued, ... 28
The different appearances of Christ after his resurrection; the body could not be taken away; his resurrection proved by the testimony of angels, soldiers, pious women.

LETTER IV.—Continuation of the subject, ... 36
Testimony of the apostles. They were no impostors, which is evident from their character, their mode of procedure, the character of the persons to whom they preached, their perseverance. Neither could they be mistaken; for it was a matter of fact, they were many in number, exceedingly incredulous, they were inspired. Incredulity of Thomas. Testimony of God. Quotation from Saurin. The subject worthy of credit.

LETTER V.—Importance of the resurrection of Christ, . 49
Why Christ did not appear to his enemies. The resurrection of Christ proves the truth of his divinity, his Messiahship, and the acceptance of his sacrifice. It is a pattern and pledge of the resurrection of the righteous, and a strong motive to holiness.

LETTER VI.—The ascension of Christ, ... 61
It was typified and predicted. It is proved by the testimony of Scripture, of angels, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of our people. Circumstances respecting the manner, time, and his employment on the occasion. Design: to prove his mission and faithfulness; as a reward for his humiliation, and a triumph over his enemies; to carry on his work in heaven; to send the Holy Spirit; to prepare a place for his people; to encourage the penitent; to comfort his people, and to draw their affections from earth to heaven.

LETTER VII.—The intercession of Christ, ... 76
Taught in the Old Testament, and confirmed by the apostles. Its nature. Christ appears in heaven for us, as mediator, in our nature, and pleads for the blessings he has purchased. Its foundation. Its objects. The blessings he intercedes for are,

the acceptance of their persons and services; that their necessary wants may be supplied; that their accusers may be silenced; their enemies overcome; and they be kept from evil; and that they may persevere. Properties of Christ's intercession: He pleads skillfully; compassionately and feelingly; righteously and faithfully; powerfully and authoritatively; zealously and fervently; successfully, and constantly, and solely. The subject teaches the majesty, holiness, and justice of God; the evil of sin, and the dignity and love of Christ. It encourages the penitent sinner, and comforts the afflicted believer.

LETTER VIII.—The kingly office of Christ, ... 97
It was typified and predicted. Ensigns of royalty ascribed to the Messiah. The people wished him to be a king. Jesus Christ is a King. He is well qualified. The nature of Christ's kingdom. Mistaken views of our people concerning it. It differs from the kingdoms of this world with respect to its foundation, subjects, laws, officers, soldiers, weapons, ensigns, and equipages. Exploits, extent. Design and duration.

LETTER IX.—Administration of Christ's kingdom, . . . 110
With respect to his subjects. They are made willing, and ruled by his laws. They are supported, corrected, defended. They enjoy many privileges: and are received at death into glory. With respect to his enemies. He has them absolutely in his power. Uses them for the good of his people. Restrains them at present, and ultimately destroys them. History of the kingdom of Christ. Improvement. How glorious the King! How honorable the subjects! How encouraging to missionary efforts! How important to submit to this King!

PART II. DIVINITY OF THE MESSIAH.

LETTER I.—A plurality in unity, ... 122
This is a great stumbling-stone. Messiah is God by nature. Distinct persons in the Godhead. The doctrine is not absurd. Incomprehensibility no objection to faith. Our people believe doctrines though mysterious. A doctrine revealed should be believed. The unity of the Godhead proved. A plurality taught in the Scriptures. The word *Elohim* used as a plural. Our rabbins greatly perplexed on this subject, and acknowledge a mystery in the word *Elohim*.

LETTER II.—On the Trinity, ... 135
Proved from passages of Scripture, and from the testimonies of the rabbins. Importance of the subject.

LETTER III.—Distinguishing marks of Deity, ... 142
Certain criteria necessary to distinguish God from the creature. The Mosaic dispensation designed to prevent idolatry. Divine criteria are names, titles, attributes, works and worship, proved from reason and from Scripture.
LETTER IV.—The Angel-Jehovah, ... 155
The Angel of the Lord. Philo, his character. Seven propositions. Different appearances of the Angel. He is called by the rabbins by different names. They ascribe all the appearances to the same Angel. All the divine criteria ascribed to this Angel. His appearance to Hagar considered. She knew him to be Jehovah.
LETTER V.—The subject continued, ... 164
The appearance of the angel to Abraham. To Jacob. To Moses. To Joshua. To Gideon, and to Manoah. Quotation from Eusebius. Design of these appearances. This Angel is Jehovah. Promised as a guide to the children of Israel. The rabbins expected the Messiah to be divine. Messiah the second person in the Trinity.

PART III. CHRIST IS TRULY GOD.

LETTER I.—He is the Angel-Jehovah, ... 180
Striking similarity between Christ and the Angel. All the divine criteria ascribed to Jesus Christ. He is called God, Jehovah, the First and the Last, the Son of God.
LETTER II.—Divine criteria, or the continuation of the subject, 191
The divine attributes ascribed to Jesus. Divine works. Such as creation, redemption, and raising the dead. Divine worship, baptism, and the Lord's supper.

PART IV. IMPORTANCE OF THE SUBJECT.

LETTER I.—Consequences if Christ be not God, . . . 201
Then it follows: That he was not the promised Messiah, but a deceiver and blasphemer. That the Jews were bound to put him to death. That the ceremonial law is not abrogated, and no atonement made. That all who have worshiped Christ have been idolaters. That into this fatal error they were led by believing the sacred Scriptures.
LETTER II.—Continuation of the subject, ... 211
If Christ be not God, then the following Scriptures in particular must lead to idolatry, viz. John, 17: 6. 2 Cor. 8: 9. Gal. 1: 1. 4: 4, 5. Phil. 2: 5–11. Heb. 1: 1-3.
LETTER III.—Consequences if Christ be truly God, . . 219

Then it appears that God is love. That love and obedience to God, and love and compassion to men, are illustrated and enforced by the strongest motives. That sin is an abomination, and most hateful to God. That to honor and worship the Son, and to believe in him, is most reasonable and just. That the condition of those who do not acknowledge him as the true God must be most awful. That the true penitent has the greatest encouragement to trust in Christ for salvation. That the state of true believers is most safe and blessed. And that all efforts to promote the cause of Christ must ultimately succeed.

LETTER IV.—The deity of the Holy Ghost, ... 234

All the divine criteria are ascribed to him. He is called God and Jehovah. He possesses all the incommunicable attributes. Such as eternity, unchangeableness, omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence. Divine attributes, such as creation, the formation of the human nature of Christ; the new creation.

LETTER V.—The subject continued, ... 243

Regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit. The resurrection. Divine worship. Baptism and doxologies. Particular passages of Scripture considered. Believers the temple of the Holy Ghost. Lying to the Holy Ghost punished with death. Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost an unpardonable sin. The Holy Ghost is the Author of inspiration. Testimonies from Jewish writers. Conclusion.

PART V. SECOND ADVENT OF THE MESSIAH.

LETTER I.—Introduction, ... 25

The subject acknowledged to be difficult. Quotations from Bishop Newton respecting the millennium. From rabbins. From Christian fathers. Satan to be bound for a thousand years.

LETTER II.—The subject continued, ... 267

Extracts from the Rev. G. S. Faber. Sentiments of the rabbins. Ten signs of the advent of Messiah. Ten consolations.

LETTER III.—Restoration of the Jews, ... 281

Events expected to take place. Prophecies not to be spiritualized. Covenant with Abraham yet to be fulfilled. A literal restoration proved from prophesies. Lev. 26, Deut. 30, Ezek. 36.

LETTER IV.—The subject continued, ... 297

Ezek. chap. 37 : 38. Hosea, 3 : 4, 5.

LETTER V.—Continuation of the subject, ... 310

Jer. 31 : 31–40. Zech. 12: 10–14. Restoration proved from facts. The extent of the land promised not yet possessed. The distinct preservation of Israel. Their general expectation of a literal

return. Their favorable circumstances. The way preparing. Jerusalem to be rebuilt. Judaism to be re-established. This called heresy. Objections answered. Such as their return not mentioned in the New Testament. There shall be but one fold. The end of their being kept distinct has been answered. Christ's kingdom not of this world. Their restoration conditional.

PART VI. MESSIAH THE JUDGE OF THE WORLD.

LETTER I.—The general resurrection, ... 332
The term explained. Importance. The doctrine proved. Possible. Analogy. Ideas of reward and punishment. Proved from Scripture, 2 Cor. 5 : 10. Job, 19 : 25–27. Isaiah, 26 : 19. John, 5 : 28, 29. 1 Cor. 15. Its nature. Author. Design. Improvement.

LETTER II.—General Judgment, ... 341
Proved from man's relation to God as his creatures and subjects. From the justice of God. From the dictates of conscience. From remarkable judgments inflicted. From the Scripture. From the testimony of heathens. The person to be the judge is Christ. He is invested with this office, as a reward for his sufferings. To the honor of his kingly office. The manner of his appearance. The persons to be tried. The matter for which they will be judged. The evidence to be produced. The properties of the trial. Impartial. Distinct. Convincing. Close.

LETTER III.—Misery of the wicked, ... 365
Its nature. Punishment of loss. Debarred from the beatific vision of God. Excluded from the court of heaven. Punishment of sense. Torments of conscience. Duration.

LETTER IV.—Happiness of the righteous, ... 373
Inconceivably great. Character of the righteous. Nature of their happiness. Negatively freed from sin. From the consequences of it. Positive happiness. Perfection of knowledge. Of will. The powers of the soul in full exercise, also of the body. The society and employment of heaven. Beauty and glory of the place. Duration.

LETTER V.—Conclusion, ... 385
Address to Benjamin, 385. To the Jewish nation, 386. To Christians, 390.

Index to subjects. 393

Ditto of scripture, ... 397

PART I.

THE EXALTATION OF THE MESSIAH.

Letter I.

INTRODUCTION.

My beloved Brother Benjamin,

Jehovah, the God of our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Angel of the covenant, having preserved me in my journey, and brought me safely back to my family, I now, agreeably to my promise in my last letter, resume with pleasure our correspondence, in a second series of letters, on some of the most important and interesting subjects respecting the Messiah.

Having in the former series considered the predictions which relate to Messiah's state of *humiliation*, and their accomplishment in the birth, life, sufferings, death and burial of Jesus Christ, I propose to consider, in the first part of this series of letters, those predictions which relate to his state of *exaltation*.

§ 1. In the sufferings and death of Christ, we have seen the Sun of Righteousness setting in great darkness, and all nature in mourning; but we shall now see him rising and shining brighter and brighter unto the perfect day, to go down no more. What is said respecting every believer, is perfectly true respecting Jesus Christ: "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. For his anger endureth but a moment: in his favor is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with

him." Ps. 97 : 11. 30 : 5. 126 : 6. The same volume of inspiration which foretold his sufferings unto death, also announced his exaltation unto eternal glory. Hence, when the two disciples that went down to Emmaus, on the morning of Christ's resurrection, had told him the cause of their sadness, viz. their disappointment in Jesus of Nazareth, who, they trusted, would have redeemed Israel, but had been crucified; and that it is now reported that he was risen again, Jesus said unto them, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." Luke, 24 : 25–27. The one was as necessary to our salvation as the other. The former was the sure foundation, and the latter the glorious superstructure.

His sufferings were necessary for the expiation of our sins, and his exaltation was necessary for the application of the merits of his death. "For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Heb. 2 : 10. As it was necessary for him to reconcile us by his death, so it was necessary for him to reinstate us in happiness by his life. Rom. 5 : 10. Reconciliation is ascribed to his death; salvation to his life in glory. He could not have been a Savior without being a sacrifice; he could not have applied that salvation without being a King; he was to descend from heaven clothed with our infirmities, to suffer for our crimes; he was to ascend to heaven invested with immortality, to present our persons before God, and prepare a glory for every believer.

Christ's state of humiliation we have already considered, and now I invite your attention to his state of exaltation.

But before we consider its different steps or parts, it may

not be improper to make a few observations to explain its nature.

§ 2. As Christ's state of humiliation respected his two natures, the divine and the human, so also his exaltation has respect to both. With respect to his divine nature:

Not that an addition was made to his intrinsic glory, for his deity was never deprived of any essential glory; nor could that be advanced, because it being infinite, was not capable of any higher degree, and was above all change. The subsistence and properties of that nature, which always remain the same, are incapable of abasement and elevation. We may as well conceive of a diminution of the essence of God, as a decrease of his essential glory. But there was a manifestation of his divine nature. Whilst Christ dwelt or tabernacled in the flesh, his divine nature wanted that reputation which was due to it from man; and in this respect Christ is said "to have made himself of no reputation," or emptied himself, as the word *Ekenose* signifies. Phil. 2:7. He that was sovereign became subject, as the seed of the woman, to the law of nature; subject as an Israelite to the law of Moses; subject as a man, and our surety, to the penal infirmities belonging to the human nature, as weariness, hunger, thirst, death. And as the divine nature seemed to be humbled, in being obscured under the veil of our flesh, so it is glorified in breaking out with the most resplendent rays in the Son. As he was humbled under the form of a servant, so he was exalted by appearing in the form of God. In the same sense that we say Christ as God was humbled, in the same sense we may say Christ as God was glorified; but it is certain that Christ, who was equal in regard of his deity with the Father, did humble himself to the form of a servant. Phil. 2:7, 8. As the divine nature may be said to be humbled by suffering an eclipse, so it may be said to be glorified by emerging out of it; as the sun may in a sort be said to enter into a glory, or reassume its glory, when it scatters a dark cloud which involved it, and strikes its warm

and clear beams through the air, there is nothing here of a glory added to the sun, but a glory exerted by the sun, which before lay in obscurity under a thick mist; and when God is said to be glorified by men, we must not conceive any addition of intrinsic glory to God, but an acknowledgment of that glory he displays in his works of creation, providence, and redemption. So the exaltation of Christ was not a conferring of a new glory upon the divine nature, but the outshining of it in the sacred vessel of his humanity, and the surmounting of those mists wherewith before it had been clouded.

§ 3. With respect to his human nature, it was a real and intrinsic exaltation into glory. There was a glory conferred upon his humanity, by the grace of union with the second person in the blessed Trinity at his incarnation; and there was a glory bestowed upon it by the communication of unmatchable perfections to his soul, a fullness of the Spirit, a spotless sanctification, and an infallible knowledge of God, and of those truths he was to reveal. But now his humanity did ascend up where his person was before, and our nature was carried up to sit with him in the same court where he had been glorious before in his deity. That nature wherein the person of the Son of God was made lower than the angels, was crowned with glory and honor. Heb. 2:7. That nature wherein he was raised up, was set at God's right hand in heavenly places; Eph. 1:20; and in that nature, as well as in the divine, the person of the Son of God had a sovereign authority granted to him. Thus the humanity was glorified above all the reach of any human understanding. The glory of the saints is not to be fathomed by the conceptions of men, much less the glory of Christ, the exemplar of all the glory they are to have. Again, as the humanity of Christ consisted of two parts, body and soul, so his exaltation respects both.

§ 4. His body was changed into a spiritual nature, in opposition to infirm flesh. The *natural* bodies of the saints

shall at the resurrection be changed into *spiritual*; 1 Cor. 15: 41; much more is the body of Christ in glory so changed, since it is the pattern according to which the bodies of the saints shall be copied and fashioned. Phil. 3: 21.

The body of Christ became immortal. He lives and shall live for evermore. Rev. 1: 18. That body was not dissolved to dust by the power of the grave, and cannot sink into nothing in the glories of heaven. The union of the Godhead to it preserved it here, and the perpetual confirmation of that union preserves it for ever above. His body lives an endless life; death shall never more lay hands on it; he has no more sufferings to endure, or satisfaction to make to the demands of law. Men and devils cannot touch him in his person, though they do in his mystical body. If the righteous are to shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, Matt. 13: 43, the Head of the righteous shines with a splendor above that of the sun, for he hath a glory upon his body, not only from the glory of his soul, (as the saints shall have,) but from the glory of his divinity in conjunction with it.

§ 5. The exaltation of Christ has respect to his soul, as well as his body. That soul which was sorrowful even unto death, was filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory. David being a prophet, spake of the Messiah when he said, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Ps. 16: 10, 11. This is the language of Christ, triumphing in consideration of his exaltation, and taking pleasure in the fruits of his sufferings; "Thou wilt show me the path of life." God has now opened the way to paradise, which was stopped up by a flaming sword, and made the path plain by admitting into heaven the Head of the believing world. This was part of the joy of the soul of Christ; he hath now a fullness of joy, a satisfying delight, instead of an over-

whelming sorrow; a fullness of joy, (not only some sparks and drops as he had now and then in his debased condition,) and that in the presence of his Father. His soul is fed and nourished with a perpetual vision of God, in whose face he beholds no more frowns, no more designs of treating him as a servant, but finds smiles that shall give a perpetual succession of joys to him, and fill his soul with fresh and pure flames; pleasures they are, pleasantness in comparison whereof the greatest joys in this life are anguish and horror. His soul has joys without mixture, pleasures without number, a fullness without want, a constancy without interruption, a perpetuity without end.

O my beloved brother Benjamin, if I could but communicate to you some of that joy and felicity which fills my soul at the contemplation of that glory which shall be revealed in those who are regenerated by the Spirit of God, and adopted into his family! For although "it doth not yet appear what we shall be, yet we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." 1 John, 3 : 2. To be like unto the Son of God! What tongue can express, what pen can describe, or what heart conceive the holiness, and the purity of body and soul, the perfection of knowledge, the height of love, and the complete satisfaction to be realized through the never-ending ages of eternity! May you and I, my dear Benjamin, be now conformed to the image of God's dear Son, that "when Christ who is our life shall appear, we also may appear with him in glory." Col. 3 : 4. To return to our subject.

§ 6. The exaltation respects the person of Christ also. His divine nature being glorified in a manifestation, and a new manner of manifestation of it; and his human nature being glorified by an accession of new qualities to it, his person then was glorified. As his person was the prime subject of humiliation, in taking upon him the form of a servant, so it was the prime subject of exaltation and glory. In regard of his person, he is glorified, as in regard of his

person he was humbled; the same person that was rich became poor. 2 Cor. 8:9. He that was rich, and he that was poor, was one and the same person. Although riches and poverty were distinct conditions, and divinity and humanity were distinct natures, yet they were the conditions, and they were the natures of one and the same person, who is both rich and poor in regard of different states, as well as immortal and mortal, existing from eternity, and born in time, in regard of different natures; eternal as God, and born as man, the person that was crucified was the Lord of glory. 1 Cor. 2:8.

§ 7. The exaltation of Christ is in respect of his being mediator.

The glory to which Christ was advanced was not the essential glory of God, for that he always possessed, and it is inseparable from his divine nature. As being God, he had all the prerogatives of God; but it was a mediatory glory conferred upon his person, as the first-born of every creature; such a glory as the humanity, dignified by the divine nature's assumption of it, was capable of. The humanity being a creature, was not capable of a divine and uncreated glory; the glory Christ hath as God, is the same with the glory of the Father; but the glory Christ hath as a mediator, is peculiar to him as a person consisting of a divine and a human nature; therefore it is *his* glory, Luke, 24:26, in a way of peculiarity belonging to him as a sufferer; for the divine nature was not capable of an addition of glory, nor the human nature capable of the infinite perfections of the divine. In regard of his essential glory, he was the Son begotten; in regard of his mediatory glory, he was the heir appointed. Heb. 1:2. He is appointed heir, in order after his sufferings, as he was appointed mediator, in order to his sufferings. Heb. 3:2. As he was mediator by a voluntary designation, so he was heir by a voluntary donation. His glory was given to him upon condition of suffering, and conferred upon him after his suffer-

ings; but he was from eternity the Lord of glory, and Son of God by a natural generation; the one belonged to him by birth, the mediatory by office; the one natural to his person, the other is the reward of his sufferings. Phil. 2: 8, 9. "Wherefore, God hath exalted him," viz. because of his obedience to death. In the essential glory, he is one with the Father; in his mediatory glory, he is lower than the Father, as being his deputy and substitute; his essential glory is absolute, his mediatory glory is delegated; "judgment is committed to him." John, 5: 21. The essential glory is altogether free, and hath no obligation upon it; the mediatory hath a charge annexed to it, (for he is ascended far above the heavens, that he may fill all things. Eph. 4: 10,) an office of priesthood to intercede, and a royal office to gather and govern those that are given to him by his Father. His essential glory he would have enjoyed if he had never undertaken to be our ransom; yet, without his sufferings for us, he had never had the glorious title of the Redeemer of the world. God would have been essentially glorious in himself if he had never created a world, but he had not then been so manifest under the title of Creator. Hence, though Christ, in regard of his divine nature, was equal with his Father, Phil. 2: 6, yet in the state of mediator and surety for man, his Father was greater than he; John, 14: 28; and in this state he was capable of a gift and glory from the Father, as from one that was superior to him in that condition; as it hath been recorded in history, that a king equal, nay, superior to another prince, hath put himself under the ensigns of that prince inferior to him, and received his pay; as he puts himself in such a military state, he is inferior to that prince he serves as his general; and what military honor may be conferred upon him for his valor and service, it is an honor distinct from that royal dignity he had before, as a sovereign in his own territories; so is this name given to Christ above every name, Phil. 2: 9, i. e. a glory surpassing that of all creatures, the potentates

of the earth, or the seraphims of heaven; which was a distinct glory from that which he had as one with the Father, before his incarnation and sufferings, and which he had possessed if he had never suffered; but this glory mentioned by the apostle was given him upon his sufferings. It was therefore a mediatory glory, whereby the authority of God was conferred upon him, not absolutely and formally, as though he were then made God, but as to the exercise of it as mediator in the human nature, which he had so obediently subjected to the cross, for the glory of the Father, and the good of the creature.

§ 8. The exaltation of Christ as mediator, includes in it a power over all creatures, for it was such a name as was "above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. 2: 10, 11. He had the same power committed to him which the Father hath; his throne is the highest, being the same with that whereon the Father sat, Rev. 3: 21, a throne of government and dominion. His commission is extensive; a power as large as the confines of heaven and earth, Matt. 28: 18, "All power is given me, both in heaven and earth." A power over hell is also put into the patent, Rev. 1: 18, and "have the keys of hell and death." He had a right to the power by the promise of his Father: "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief, when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin; he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sins of many, and made intercessions for the transgressors." Isa. 53: 10, 12. The solemn investiture was not given him till his ascension. God put the sceptre in his hands. when he used that form of words, Ps. 110: 1, "Sit

thou at my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool." At his resurrection he was stript of his servile garb, at his ascension he put on his royal robes, on his session at the right hand of God he was crowned, and began the exercise of his royal dignity. He has all power over all the treasure and all the inhabitants of heaven, and all things on the earth, "for there is nothing left that is not put under him." Heb. 2:8. He hath a name above every name in the earth, no person was ever so famous, none was ever adored by so many worshipers, none worshiped with so much fervency, none ever had so many lives sacrificed for his glory, and the acknowledgment of his mediation and person. His glory hath extended one time or the other over the whole world. 'Tis a power that hath given check to the power of kings, and silenced the reason of philosophers; it hath put to flight the armies of hell, and been celebrated by the songs of angels; no name was ever so glorious, no power ever so great.

Having made these preliminary observations, I will in my next letter consider the different steps or parts of the Messiah's exaltation.

Farewell.

Letter II.

RESURRECTION OF THE MESSIAH.

My dear Benjamin,

Agreeably to promise, I will now invite your attention to the different steps or parts of the exaltation of the Messiah; they may be divided into his resurrection from the dead; his ascension into heaven; his intercession as a priest; his reign as King, and his coming to judgment.

We commence with the first of these subjects, viz: The resurrection of the Messiah.

§ 1. That the Messiah was to rise from the dead on the third day, was *typified* in sundry instances. Isaac rescued from the jaws of death, on the third day from the time Abraham had the order to sacrifice his son, and from which time he was looked upon by him as a dead man; Joseph being taken from prison and promoted to the court of Pharaoh; David, after being hunted by Saul like a partridge, raised to the throne of Israel; Jonah raised again the third day from the belly of the fish; the scape goat let go into the wilderness, when the other taken with it was slain; and the living bird let loose after having been dipped in the blood of the bird that had been slain; very fitly represented the resurrection of the Messiah, after his painful and ignominious death. Dr. Pierson considers the sheaf of the first fruits on the second day of the feast of unleavened bread, as a type of the resurrection of the Messiah, who rose on that very day, and became the first fruits of them that sleep. Lev. 23. 10–12.

"Under the Levitical law," says he, "all the fruits of the earth in the land of Canaan were profane, none might eat of them till they were consecrated, and that was done in the

feast of the first fruits. One sheaf was taken out of the field and brought to the priest, who lifted it up as it were in the name of all the rest, waving it before the Lord, and it was accepted of them, so that all the sheaves of the field were holy from the acceptation of that; for 'If the first fruits be holy, the lump also is holy.' Rom. 11: 16. And this was always done the day after the Sabbath, that is the paschal solemnity after which the fullness of the harvest followed; by which thus much was foretold and represented, that as the sheaf was lifted up and waved, and the lamb was offered on that day by the priest to God, so the promised Messiah, that immaculate lamb which was to die, that priest which, dying, was to offer up himself to God, was upon this day to be lifted up and raised from the dead, or rather to shake, and lift up and present himself to God so as to be accepted for us, that so our dust might be sanctified, our corruption hallowed, our mortality consecrated to eternity." On the creed 259.

But this all-important event has also been predicted in several passages of Scripture.

§ 2. In Psalm 2d, verse 7th, it is said, "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee." That this Psalm relates to the Messiah, is acknowledged by our Rabbins (p. 120,) With respect to this verse in particular, see Zohar in numb. fol. 82, 2. Tal. Succah, fol. 52, 1, Maim. in Tract. Sanhed, c. 10. What is said in this Psalm is not applicable to David or any other mere creature. Neither David, nor Solomon, nor any other ever had the promise of possessing "the heathen for his inheritence or the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession." To give that reverence, adoration, and worship required; to exercise that trust and confidence in any other but the Messiah, would be idolatry. Besides, as the Apostle justly observes, "to which of the angels, said God, at any time, thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee?" Heb. 1: 5. Hence, the same

apostle, in the midst of the synagogue, applies it to the resurrection of Christ, saying, "We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God has fulfilled the same unto us, their children, in that he has raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm; thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee." Acts, 13: 32, 33.

§ 3. Another prediction of the resurrection of the Messiah is in Psalm 16: 10, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption." The plain meaning of the words is, that the person spoken of was to rise from the dead without seeing corruption. The word *nephesh*, translated soul, more frequently relates to the mere body; Lev. 19: 28–21: 1; and the word *sheol*, translated hell, signifies frequently the grave; Gen. 4: 38; Isa. 38: 18; i. e. thou wilt not leave my body in the grave. But had the Psalmist stopped here, it would have been applicable to all mankind, for none shall be left in the grave; the next clause, therefore, explains the former, viz. for thou wilt not suffer thine holy one to see corruption. The *wav* conjunction, translated *neither*, is frequently explanatory, (page 167.) Hence it is said in Medresh Tehilkim, "The moth and worm shall have no power over him." The learned Dr. Kennicot translates it, "For thou wilt not abandon my life to the grave." It is evident, therefore, that David did not speak of himself, for he died, was buried, and saw corruption. Hence, said the apostle, "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the Patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption." From the whole tenor of the Psalm, it appears to relate to the Messiah as

expressing his abhorrence of the general idolatry of mankind, and his own zeal for the honor of Jehovah; with the full assurance of his being raised from the dead before his body should be corrupted in the grave. Hence, the inspired apostles, Peter and Paul, apply it to Jesus Christ to prove his resurrection from the dead, as I shall show hereafter.

§ 4. I proceed to another prediction in Psa. 118:22, "The stone which the builders refused is become the headstone of the corner, this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes." Kimchi says some of our Rabbins ascribe the whole of this Psalm to the Messiah; the 22d verse is expressly applied to him in Zohar. Exod. fol. 93, 3. Tickcone Zohar. correct, 5 fol. 15:2. Yarchi in Mica, 5:2. The Lord Jesus Christ applied these verses to himself. Math. 21:41, and the apostle Peter applies them to him, Acts, 4:11; 1 Peter, 2:7. Nor did the Jews in their time object to the application; yea, the common people that attended Christ when he rode into Jerusalem, and the children in the temple, took their *Hosannah* from this Psalm, vers. 25, 26; Math. 21:9, 15. The Messiah is often compared to a stone for strength and duration, as a foundation, in the temple of the living God. Hear the words of the Lord, "Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste." Isa. 28:16. The Targum interprets this passage of a great King; but Yarchi, of the King Messiah. See also Tal. Bab. Sanhed. fol. 38:1; and it is applied to Jesus Christ by the apostle, Rom. 9:33; 1 Peter 2:6. He is that "stone cut out of the mountain without hands." Dan. 2:45. Him the builders refused. The High Priests, Scribes, Lawyers, and Pharisees, who professed to build up the people in knowledge and righteousness, and in the knowledge and faith of the true Messiah, rejected Jesus as the Christ, and refused him as the Messiah, the Savior, and

Redeemer, and set him at naught; but to their great mortification, agreeably to this prediction, he rose again from the dead, and became the head-stone of the corner which unites angels and men, Jews and Gentiles, saints above and below, saints in all ages and places. "This is the Lord's doing," and blessed be his holy name.

§ 5. Isaiah, 26: 19, may probably be considered as another prediction of the resurrection of the Messiah. "Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise: awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." The passage is understood of a literal resurrection from the dead, both by Jewish and Christian interpreters, see Meade's work, p. 713. Sanhed, fol. 90: 2. Kethuboth, 111: 1. Mid. Cohel. 62: 3. Remarkable are the words of Elias Levite in his Tish. 109, "The word *nevelah*," saith he, "is never used in Scripture but of the carcass of a beast or fowl that is dead; and never of a man that is dead, but of him that dies an unnatural death, excepting this place, which speaks of the resurrection of the dead; and I greatly wonder that the prophet should call the bodies of the pure righteous ones a carcass; no doubt there is a reason for it known to the wise men and cabalists, which I am ignorant of." Had R. Elias compared this passage with Daniel, 9: 24, where Messiah is said to die an unnatural death, the death of a criminal, to be cut off, he might have found a solution to his mystery. To return: the person speaking appears to be the Messiah, from the character of him in the context, who is the Lord Jehovah, in whom is everlasting strength, ver. 4; the desire, the expectation of his people, verse 8, 9, who ordains peace for them, and works all their works in them, verse 12; and has sole dominion over them, verse 13. Hence, at the time of the resurrection of the Messiah's dead body from the grave, others were to arise with him; which was fulfilled at the resurrection of Jesus Christ: "The graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints that slept arose

and came out of the graves after his resurrection." Math. 27, 52, 53. Now, it is worthy of observation that, although these saints arose from the dead at the crucifixion of Christ, yet they did not leave their graves till after the resurrection of Jesus. Hence, saith the apostle, Christ is risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept. 1. Cor. 15: 20.

§ 6. The apostle Paul, in proving the resurrection of Jesus, produces the following passage: "I will give you the sure mercies of David." Psa. 53: 3. That the Messiah is here intended, is evident from his name David, which is frequently given to him, see Jer. 30: 9, Ezek. 34: 23, 24, Hosea, 3: 5, as also from his several offices, "given for a witness to the people, as a leader and commander," which words as well as the former are, by Aben Ezra and Kinchi, understood of the Messiah. Now, by the "sure mercies of David," are to be understood the blessings of the everlasting covenant, which the Messiah by his death and resurrection was to procure; but had he only died and not risen from the dead, these blessings had not been ratified or made *sure*. Therefore, when God promises his people that he will *give* them the *sure* mercies of David, or of the Messiah, he promises that the Messiah shall not only die to procure *mercies* for them, but that he shall rise again from the dead to make those mercies sure to them.

§ 7. Permit me, my dear Benjamin, to mention but one passage more from the prophets, which many have considered not only as a prediction of Messiah's resurrection from the dead, but also as pointing out the exact period he was to remain under the power of death. You will probably anticipate that I allude to Hosea, 6: 2 "After two days will he revive us; in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." This passage is applied to the resurrection and to the Messiah, by R. Moses Haddarshan, in Gen. 22: 4. Ber. Rab. and the Targum says, "After two days he will revive us; he will revive us in the

days of consolation which are to come." Now, what else can he mean by the days of consolation, but the days of Messiah, who is the only consolation of Israel. Luke, 2 : 25. Nor are these words applicable in their literal sense to any one but to the resurrection of the Messiah, and they have been fulfilled in Jesus Christ, as shall be shown hereafter.

§ 8. Having shown from the Old Testament that the resurrection of the Messiah was both typified and predicted, I will now refer to the predictions delivered by Jesus himself concerning his resurrection from the dead; and the design of our Lord in delivering these and other predictions is stated in these words. Having spoken of the treachery of Judas, he adds, "Now I tell you before it come, that when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am." John 13 : 19.

When Jesus had driven out of the temple the buyers and sellers, the Jews asked for a sign, to prove his authority for such conduct; "Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body. When, therefore, he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them: and they believed the Scriptures, and the word which Jesus had said." John, 12 : 18–22. On a similar occasion, Jesus answered and said unto them, "an evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the Prophet Jonas; for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Math. 12 : 39, 40. And on another occasion he said, "Therefore does my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." John,

10 : 17, 18. In these different passages our Lord predicted his own resurrection. And it appears that the Priests and Pharisees both knew and understood the meaning of these sayings, for as soon as Christ was dead, they went to Pilate, saying, "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, 'After three days I will rise again.'" Math. 27 : 62, 63.

§ 9. I will name but one prediction more, recorded by the Evangelist Luke, chap. 18 : 31–34, "Then he took with him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated and spitted on; and they shall scourge him and put him to death; and the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things; and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken." Hence, immediately after the resurrection of Christ, the angel said to the women who came to embalm the body of Jesus, "he is not here, but risen : remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying, the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again." And the Lord Jesus Christ himself, on the very day of his resurrection, met the apostles, and after having given them visible proofs of being risen from the dead, reminded them of these predictions, saying, "these are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day."

§ 10. Against these predictions of the Lord Jesus it has been objected, "that the throat of the whale is so narrow

as not to admit the body of a man." Let the objectors read the Scriptures in the original, and they will not meet with a whale in the book of Jonah: nothing is said of a whale either in the original or in the translation; and in the New Testament, the word *Ketas* signifies any great fish. The next objection is that our Lord was not much more than one day in the grave, for he was buried at the close of Friday and rose early on the first day of the week. You are too well acquainted, my dear Benjamin, with the custom of our people in computing time, to lay any stress on this objection. You well know that a *part* of a day is considered as much as a day and night or twenty-four hours. A male child is to be circumcised when eight days old. Now, if a child is born at the last hour of the day, nay, an hour before sun-set, that hour is considered the first day. Six days and one hour after that the child may be circumcised, and is said to be eight days old, though in reality only six days and two hours. Hence, as Christ was buried before sun-set on Friday, and lay in the grave the whole of the Sabbath, if he rose but one hour after the Sabbath was ended, every Jew would call that three days and three nights, though in reality but twenty-six hours.

In my next letter, I hope to prove the *reality* of Christ's resurrection. "Now may the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Farewell.

LETTER III.

THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

My dear Benjamin,

Having proved in my last letter, that the resurrection of the Messiah was both typified and predicted, I will now show their fulfillment in Jesus Christ. As the resurrection of Jesus Christ is an event the most important, so likewise it is related most minutely and most circumstantially by the four Evangelists, and is established upon the best evidences possible.

§ 1. I will endeavor to give you a distinct account of the appearances of our Lord, from the time of his resurrection from the dead until his ascension into heaven, in their regular order. "In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre. And behold, there was a great earthquake, for the angel of the Lord had descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white like snow; and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men." Probably the earthquake frightened the two women that had come to the sepulchre at the close of the Sabbath; but the next morning very early they came again, "bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them." And as they were going along, "they said among themselves, who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? for it was very great. And when they looked they saw that the stone was rolled away,

and they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus." "Then one of the women ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other desciple whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, they have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him. Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and went to the sepulchre." Whilst this was doing, the women, who had remained about the sepulchre, entering in a second time, "saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment. And they were affrighted. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus which was crucified. He is not here, for he is risen, as he said; *Come, see* the place where the Lord lay;" upon this invitation of the angel, they went into the sepulchre, and there they saw two other angels, who said unto them, "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen; remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying, the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and behold he goeth before you into Galilee, there shall ye see him; lo, I have told you. And they remembered his words, and returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven. And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not." In the meanwhile Peter and John had gone to the sepulchre, and Peter went in first, and saw the linen clothes lie; and the napkin that was about his head not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. "Then went in that other disciple which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw and believed. For as yet they knew not the Scriptures, that he must rise again from the dead. Then his disciples went away again to their own home; But Mary stood without at the sepulchre, weeping. And as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepul-

chre, and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? she saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. (Christ's first appearance.) Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardner, saith unto him, Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary; she turneth herself and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master. Jesus said unto her, go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." Now, as the company of women who had carried the news of having seen an angel who had told them that Jesus had risen from the dead, were returning, "Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshiped him. Then said Jesus unto them, be not afraid; go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me." (Christ's second appearance.)

§ 2. The woman, thus ordered by Jesus himself to carry the tidings of his resurrection into the city, went no further in quest of Peter, but being now charged with a more important message, turned back immediately to publish the glad tidings of having seen the Lord.

"Now, when they were going, behold some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all things that were done; and when they had assembled with the Elders, and taken counsel, they gave large sums (i. e. great bribes) unto the soldiers, saying, say ye, his disciples came by night and stole him away while ye slept. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you; so they took the money and did as

they were taught. And this saying is commonly reported amongst the Jews until this day."

During this time, as is supposed, the Lord appeared to Peter, according to 1 Cor. 15: 5; which is his third appearance.

After this Jesus met the two disciples in the way to Emmaus. This is his fourth appearance on the day of his resurrection. This interesting and important meeting and conversation which took place, is narrated by the Evangelist Luke, c. 24: 13–29. On the evening of the same day, Jesus appeared to the apostles and others, Thomas being absent. This is the fifth appearance, and is thus related. "The same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see, for a spirit has not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet, and his side. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of broiled fish, and of an honey comb. And he took it and did eat before them. But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didimus, i. e. the twin, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe."

§ 3. The sixth appearance of our Lord took place when all the apostles were together, and Thomas with them. And Jesus said to Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and

behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said, My Lord and my God. Jesus said unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

Next, our Lord appeared to his disciples, the seventh time, at the sea of Tiberias; John, 21: 1–25; and afterwards the eighth time to five hundred of the brethren in Galilee. Math. 28: 16, 17. The ninth appearance was to James, as we are informed by the apostle Paul, 1 Cor. 15: 6; and lastly he appeared to the apostles, and in their presence ascended into heaven.

§ 4. Thus, my dear Benjamin, I have endeavoured to give you, in as brief a manner as possible, an account of the ten different appearances of our Lord and Savior in the order in which they seem to have taken place; but it is more than probable that he did appear more frequently, for we are expressly told by the Evangelist Luke, "that he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." Acts, 1: 3. And the Evangelist John says: "many other signs did Jesus truly in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and believing, ye might have life through his name." John 20; 30, 31. We shall now proceed to examine the subject.

§ 5. That Jesus Christ died on the cross, that he was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea; that his tomb was sealed with the seal of the High Priest; that it was guarded by a band of Roman soldiers; and that the body of Jesus was not found in the tomb early on the first day of the week, is believed by our people as well as by Christians. The only question of dispute is what became of the body of Jesus? It must either have been taken away, or it must

have risen from the dead. If it was taken away, it must have been done either by the enemies of Jesus or by his friends. The enemies surely would not do it; for this is the very thing they were anxious to prevent, and therefore procured a guard to watch the tomb, lest his disciples should come and take away the body, and say he had risen. And as the enemies would not do it, so the friends could not, even if they had been inclined to do so. For consider, dear Benjamin, their cowardly spirit. They had frequent demonstrations of the almighty power of their Master, who but spake to the raging waves, and there was a great calm; and gave but the word of command, and legions of devils trembled and obeyed. What then had they to fear? Yet when they saw but a few men approaching the Garden of Gethsemane, all fled and forsook Christ except Peter; and he, the most zealous, denied his Lord and Master thrice, and swore and cursed that he knew not the man. Now, is it credible that men of such timorous dispositions, and so few in number, would attempt to approach the tomb and take away the dead body, when they knew that a band of soldiers, not less than fifty in number, were placed there for the purpose of preventing the body from being taken away? But supposing the temper and disposition of the disciples to have been the reverse of what they were, bold, enterprizing, cunning impostors, and capable of making so hazardous an attempt; can it also be supposed that a company of Roman soldiers, trained up under the strictest discipline, and placed there but a few hours before night, should be all asleep at the same time, and sleep so soundly and so long as not to be awakened, either by the rolling away of the stone, which must have been very large to cover the whole tomb, or by the carrying off the body. Besides, what evidence have we that the disciples took away the body? None hath ever been offered, except that of a part of the soldiers; who said, that whilst they were asleep the disciples came and stole away the body. How ridiculous the story! If they were

asleep, how could they know what became of the body, whether it arose or was taken away? And if taken away, how did they know that the disciples did it? We should think it almost incredible that any one in his right senses would believe such an ill-contrived, self-refuting story. Would any people or jury receive the testimony of such a set of men, who deposed, that one night, while they were fast asleep, they saw the accused break open his neighbor's stable and steal his horse? And yet, my dear Benjamin, you *well* know that this most idle, inconsistent, and improbable story, which rests wholly and solely on the testimony of the soldiers, is still believed by our people, whilst they deny the resurrection of Christ, which is established by evidence superior to any other fact that has been proved to the satisfaction of all. Let us then carefully and most scrupulously examine the following testimony in favor of the resurrection of Christ.

§ 6. First, we have the testimony of angels.

The apparition of angels was very common under the Old Testament, whereby God used to attest and verify to man the truth and reality of things. From the preceding statement, it appears that at first one angel from heaven came and removed the stone from the mouth of the sepulchre, and sat upon it, and spoke to the women as they were entering into the sepulchre, and bade them be of good cheer, for Christ was risen, and shewed them the place where the Lord lay, void of Christ's body. After the women went out, two other angels met them, and confirmed what the first had said. "They appeared," said the Evangelist, "in shining white garments;" but these could not be more *clear* than their testimony is true. "He is not here, for he is risen."

§ 7. Secondly, We notice the testimony of the soldiers.

Because the testimony of an adversary is in most cases thought of greater validity, we have not only friends but even enemies of Christ to confirm the truth of his resurrection. For "behold some of the watch came into the

city and showed unto the chief priests all the things that were done," i. e. gave them an account of the earthquake, and of the vision of the angel that rolled away the stone, and of the empty sepulchre.

Nor is it unlikely that the soldiers told many of the things that had happened before they were bribed by the high priest. Thus, whilst the priests proposed to prevent our Lord's resurrection from being palmed upon the world, resolving no doubt to show his body publicly after the third day as an impostor, they put the truth of Christ's resurrection beyond all question, by furnishing a number of unexceptionable witnesses to it, whose testimony they themselves could not refuse.

§ 8. Thirdly, The testimony of the pious women deserves our next consideration.

These having gone to the sepulchre with the spices they had prepared, found the stone rolled away, and saw angels, who declared the good news that Jesus had risen from the dead, and commissioned them to go and tell the apostles of it, and to direct them to go to Galilee, where Jesus had appointed to meet them. Accordingly, they hastened to obey the heavenly command, and behold Jesus himself met them, bid them "All hail," and confirmed the commission they had received. Thus they were well qualified to testify of the resurrection of Christ upon sensible and sure evidence, having heard it with their own ears from the lips of holy angels; and seen the Lord Jesus himself with their own eyes. Here we may see, my dear Benjamin, the truth of God's word, "them that honor me I will honor, and they that dispise me shall be lightly esteemed." 1 Saml. 2: 30. These pious women first saw the Lord after his resurrection, and were made as it were apostles to the apostles. This was an honour put upon them, and a recompense for their constant affectionate adherence to him at the cross and in the grave, and a rebuke to the disciples who forsook him Still God chooseth the weak things of the world

to confound the mighty; and puts the treasure not only into earthen vessels, but here into the weaker vessels. In my next letter we shall examine the testimony of the apostles. Farewell.

Letter IV.

CONTINUATION OF THE SUBJECT.

My dear Benjamin,

§ 1. Fourthly.—I will now call your attention to the testimonies of the apostles.

That they preached the resurrection of Christ, is not denied by any. It was one great part of their office to testify of the resurrection of Christ. On this account Peter urged the necessity of electing another apostle in the place of Judas, Acts, 1 : 21, 22, and he made it a prominent part of his sermon to Cornelius and his household, saying "We are witnesses of all things which he said both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they slew, and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day and showed him openly, not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before of God, even to us who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead." Acts, 10 : 39–41. See also Acts, 1 : 22. 3 : 15. 4 : 2, 33. 17 : 30, 32. 13 : 31. 15 : 18.

Now, the apostles must either have believed the resurrection of Christ to be a fact, or they must have conspired to act the part of deceivers, to impose upon the world by asserting to be fact what they knew to be false. That the latter could not be the case, is evident,

§ 2. From their character. They were men of God, of unspotted character, unblemished honesty and integrity.

Men of that sort would neither tell a lie, nor sanction it.

When Ananias and Sapphira attempted to impose upon the apostles by telling a lie, Peter told them that their punishment was death, which immediately took place. In all their writings, the apostles enforced the duty of speaking truth upon all occasions, and enforced the duty by the considerations of a judgment day. In Eph. 4; 25, the apostle commands that, "putting away lying, they speak every man truth with his neighbor." And again in Col. 3: 9, "Lie not one to another." Nay, it is very evident that they considered it sinful for any man to lie, even out of zeal for the glory of God. For says the apostle, "If the truth of God has more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner? And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil that good may come? whose damnation is just." Rom. 3: 7, 8.

Now, that any men, who firmly believed that God would punish them for speaking an untruth, though for the advancement of a good cause, should, at the hazard of their lives, and without a prospect of gain or advantage, make assertions, which at the same time they knew to be false; should, for instance, affirm that they saw and conversed with Jesus Christ after his resurrection, knowing or believing that he was not risen from the dead, and expect to be judged hereafter by that very same Jesus, is too impossible to gain credit.

The motives of their actions show the excellency of their character. The motives by which wicked men are actuated they detested. "Gold and silver they had none;" the honours and pleasures of the world they renounced; poverty, reproach, sufferings and martyrdom they expected and met with; and all this, because they preached the resurrection of Jesus. Nothing else but an attachment to their Lord and Master, through evil as well as good report, could be their motive. Besides, if Jesus had not risen from the dead, in-

stead of feeling such an attachment to him, as to constrain them to do and suffer all things in honor of him, we should have expected that his disciples would have publicly declared him to have been an impostor and deceiver, because he had so often declared, that after three days he would rise again.

§ 3. That they were no impostors, appears from their mode and manner of procedure. Had they published the resurrection of Christ first in distant countries, after the lapse of so many years, it might have been supposed that distance of place and time, rendering it exceedingly difficult for their hearers to obtain exact information, had facilitated the establishment of error, and concealed deception. But the apostles, agreeably to instruction received from their Lord and Master, "to commence at Jerusalem," preached first the resurrection on the day of Pentecost, in that city, in the public synagogues, in the very place where the Savior had been condemned and executed, had died, and been buried, and his tomb guarded by a band of soldiers, who declared that the body was not found in the grave on the first day of the week. Now, my dear Benjamin, would impostors have acted thus? Suppose that a set of men had determined to deceive and impose upon the public a report that a certain well-known person who had been executed in the city of New-York, and publicly buried, had a few days afterwards risen again from the grave, and had appeared repeatedly to different public characters, to whom he was well known, and with whom he had conversed, ate, and drank, would they commence to circulate this report within a few days after the fact is said to have taken place, in the city of New-York, in the most public places, where it was within the power of all to inquire of the persons to whom he is said to have appeared, and to examine, and re-examine, all the circumstances of the case; or would they not rather go to a remote part of the country, where it was not in the power of the people to contradict the report, and where,

however strange and incredible it might appear to some, yet it would find credit with many, for want of evidence to the contrary. Besides,

§ 4. The apostles preached the resurrection of Christ before such persons as were perfectly qualified to detect the imposture, if such had been the case. Their testimony was examined by Jews and heathens, by philosophers and rabbins, and by an infinite number of people who went annually to Jerusalem. "For, my brethren," saith the great Mr. Saurine, "Providence so ordered these circumstances that the testimony of the apostles might not be suspected. Providence continued Jerusalem forty years after the resurrection of our Lord, that all the Jews in the world might examine the evidence concerning it, and obtain authentic proof of the truth of Christianity. I repeat it again, then, the apostles maintained the resurrection of Jesus Christ before Jews, before Pagans, before philosophers, before rabbins, before courtiers, before lawyers, before people expert in examining and cross-examining witnesses, in order to lead them into self-contradiction. Had the apostles borne testimony in consequence of a preconcerted plot between themselves, is it not morally certain, that as they were examined before such different and capable men, some one would have discovered the pretended fraud?"

§ 5. Another proof that the apostles believed the resurrection of Christ as a fact, arises from the harmony of their testimony. They all unanimously deposed that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. It is very extraordinary, that a gang of five hundred impostors, (I speak the language of infidels,) a company in which there must needs be people of different capacities and tempers, the witty and the dull, the timid and the bold; it is very strange that such a numerous body as this should maintain an unity of evidence. This, however, is the case of our witnesses. It is indeed acknowledged that there are appearances of inconsistency in the history of the resurrection of Christ, given by the four

Evangelists; but these have been frequently reconciled by the critics, and especially in that excellent work of West on the resurrection of Christ, and in M'Knight's Harmony of the Gospels. Nay, from the *seeming inconsistency*, it may be inferred, to the advantage of the Evangelists, *that they did not write in concert;* which doubtless they would and must have done had they endeavored to impose upon the world "a cunningly devised fable." But truth, like honesty, oftentimes neglects appearances. Hypocrisy and imposture are always guarded.

§ 6. The perseverance of the disciples in their testimony, to the end, is a very striking proof that they believed the resurrection of Jesus to be a fact. In general, the more wicked a traitor is, the more he trembles, alters, and confesses at the approach of death. Having betrayed, for his own interest, the law of his country, the interests of society, the confidence of his prince, and the credit of religion, he betrays the companion of his imposture, the accomplices of his crimes. Here, on the contrary, the apostles persist in their testimony till death, and sign the truths they have published with the last drop of their blood. What Christian ever contradicted himself? What Christian ever impeached his accomplices? What Christian ever discovered this pretended imposture?

Hence, it is evident, my dear Benjamin, that the apostles believed the truth and reality of the resurrection of Christ; and hence the apostle Peter, who was one of the witnesses, appeals to the church in behalf of himself and the rest of his brethren, where he says, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye witnesses of his majesty." 2 Pet. 2: 16.

§ 7. I am perfectly aware, my dear Benjamin, that it may be said, "Granted the apostles believed what they testified, yet they may have been mistaken." Doubtless many may have died as martyrs to their peculiar opinions and senti-

ments, and yet they were mistaken. But this could not have been the case with regard to the subject in hand. The apostles could not be mistaken. This will evidently appear, if we consider, that,

It was a matter of fact, and not of mere opinion. Their judgment was guided and informed by the exercise of their senses. They had the same "infallible proofs" of Christ's being alive after his sufferings and death, as they had of his being alive before it. They *saw* him, saw the particular marks of identity in his person and countenance, in his hands, feet, and side, which had been pierced at the cross. And Thomas, who had refused to believe it, except he put his finger into the print of the nails, and thrust his hand into his side, had that farther satisfaction, unreasonable as it was, granted him, and the effect was, that he exclaimed, "My Lord and my God!" Farther, they saw him also *eat;* they *heard* him speak, and were by him commanded to *handle him*, and see that he was flesh and bones. The evidence was so clear and convincing, that the apostles were emboldened to preach this doctrine in opposition to all contradictions and hardships. "We cannot but speak the things which we have *seen* and *heard*." St. Luke informs us, that what he wrote he "had a perfect understanding of from the very first." And the apostle John says, "That which was from the beginning, which we have *heard*, which we have *seen* with our eyes, which we have *looked* upon, and our hands have *handled*, of the word of life; that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you." That profound reasoner, Mr. Saurine, speaking of the facts, says, "Had they been metaphysical reasons, depending on a chain of principles and consequences; had they been periods of chronology, depending on long and difficult calculations; had they been distant events, which could only have been known by the relation of others, their reasonings might have been suspected; but they are facts which are in question; facts which the witnesses declared they had seen with their own

eyes, at divers places, and at several times. Had they seen Jesus Christ? Had they touched him? Had they sat at the table and eaten with him? All these are questions of facts; it is impossible they could be deceived in them."

§ 8. It was not an individual, or a few, who said that they saw Jesus risen from the dead. The imagination of one might have been so wrought upon, by a desire of seeing Jesus again, that he might have fancied he had actually seen him; but when he was seen by a number of pious women, by Peter, by the disciples in the way to Emmaus, by the ten apostles, and again afterwards when Thomas was with them, and, lastly, by more than five hundred brethren, what possible room is there left for doubt or suspicion? And as they were many in number, so also they saw him often, as is evident from the statement in the first paragraphs of the preceding letter.

§ 9. The incredulity of the apostles is another proof that they were not deceived. Had they been persons forward and credulous, then we might have cause to suspect what they said, their testimony might have been looked upon as the product of a fond precipitancy, and not of sober reason and conviction. But they were far otherwise. Notwithstanding the repeated promises of our Lord, that he would rise again from the dead, yet when they were told that he had actually risen, "their words seemed to them as idle tales," and they believed them not; they looked upon the story which the women had told, as a mere scheme, or as the delusion of a disordered imagination. The two disciples, in the way to Emmaus, acknowledged that the news brought by the women, of the resurrection of Christ, was rather a matter of astonishment and perplexity to them, than welcome news. Hence the Lord Jesus reproved their unbelief, saying, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!" and having opened their eyes, so that they knew him, they immediately went up to Jerusalem to the apostles, and told them that the Lord had risen indeed,

and had appeared to them, but "they believed them not;" "whilst they were yet speaking, Jesus himself appeared in the midst of them, and said, Peace be unto you; but they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit." To dispel their fears, and remove their doubts, Jesus came forward and spake to them, and showed them his hands and feet, desiring them to handle him, and be convinced, by the united report of their senses, that it was he. Thus, you perceive, my dear Benjamin, that the apostles would not believe that Jesus had risen from the dead, even after they had received the testimony of the pious women, and of Peter, and of the two disciples that came from Emmaus, and even after they themselves had seen Jesus standing in the midst of them, until they had actually looked attentively to his hands and feet; nay, although they began to rejoice and be glad, yet their minds were still wavering and full of doubts. Jesus, therefore, knowing their thoughts, called for meat, and did eat with them, to prove more fully the certain truth of his resurrection from the dead, and the reality of his presence with them on this occasion.

§ 10. Yet after all these ocular and sensible demonstrations of the reality of the resurrection of Christ, something more was necessary to remove from their minds the deep rooted prejudices against the sufferings and death of the Messiah, and their worldly expectation of an earthly kingdom; therefore the Lord Jesus "breathed" on them, and said "receive ye the Holy Ghost." The effect of this spiritual illumination was, that by perceiving the agreeableness of the things which had befallen him with the ancient prophecies respecting Messiah, their minds were quieted, and perfectly satisfied, respecting the necessity of his sufferings, as well as the reality of his resurrection. Thus the credulity of the apostles is overruled for the confirmation of our faith; that they were not deceived in preaching the resurrection of Christ.

§ 11. In addition to what has been said, I cannot but no-

tice the conduct of St. Thomas, overruled by the condescension of our Lord, as another proof of the validity of his resurrection; it is thus recorded and needs no comment.—"But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came; the other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord; but he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger in the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. Then after eight days, again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst and said, Peace be unto you. Then said he unto Thomas, reach hither thy finger and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and My God; Jesus said unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me thou hast believed, blessed are they which have not seen, and yet have believed."

§ 12. Now, my dear Benjamin, we have seen and examined the testimonies of holy angels, of pious women, of inveterate enemies, and of disinterested and honest men, and I trust you will be convinced that the "Lord is risen indeed." But such is the importance of the subject, (as will be shown,) that although I have already detained you so long, I must beg your attention for a few moments longer to the testimony of God himself; for if we receive the witness of men, surely the witness of God is greater. For God, who is truth himself, will never set the seal of his omnipotence to a lie. Our Lord had promised to his disciples the Holy Spirit, who should be to them a *comforter*, and with respect to himself, an advocate to plead his cause and defend his innocence: this promise was partially fulfilled, on the very day of his resurrection, (as has been shown in the preceding §,) "he breathed on his disciples, and said, receive ye the Holy Ghost." And after his ascension on the day of Pentecost, he bestowed the Holy Ghost more plentifully;

enabling the apostles to speak to the multitude in different languages, which they had never known before. And when the people were not able to account for these strange things, the apostle Peter pointed out to them the true cause, saying, "This Jesus has God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses; therefore, being at the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he has shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so also is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him." Thus the Holy Ghost confirmed the doctrine of the resurrection of Christ, preached by the apostles, by furnishing them with miraculous power, both to be exercised by them and to be communicated to others.

§ 13. The great and pious Mr. Saurine, speaking of this part of the subject, says, "Imagine these venerable men, addressing their adversaries on the day of the Christian Penticost, in this language: You refuse to believe us on our depositions; five hundred of us you think are enthusiasts, all infected with the same malady, who have carried our absurdities so far as to imagine we have seen a man whom we have not seen; eaten with a man with whom we have not eaten; conversed with a man with whom we have not conversed; or perhaps you think us impostors, or take us for madmen, who intend to suffer ourselves to be imprisoned and tortured, and crucified, for the sake of enjoying the pleasure of deceiving mankind, by prevailing upon them to believe a fanciful resurrection: you think we are so stupid as to act a part so extravagant; but bring your sick; present your demoniacs; fetch hither your dead; confront us with Medes, Partheans, Elamites; let Cappadocia, Pontius, and Egypt, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, let all the nations and people send us some of their inhabitants;

we will restore hearing to the deaf and sight to the blind; we will make the lame walk; we will cast out devils, and raise the dead. We, we little publicans, we illiterate men, we tent makers, we fishemen, we will discourse with all the people of the world in their own languages. We will explain prophecies, illuminate the most obstruse predictions, develop the most sublime mysteries, teach you notions of God, precepts for the conduct of life, plans of morality and religion more extensive, more sublime, and more advantageous, than those of your priests and philosophers; yea, than Moses himself. We will do more still. We will communicate these gifts to you, the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, the works of miracles, prophecy, discernment of spirits, divers kinds of tongues. 1 Cor. 12: 8. All these shall be communicated to you by our ministry. All these things the apostles professed, all these proofs they gave of the resurrection of Christ. "This Jesus has God raised up; and he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." "Collect all these proofs together," continues that profound reasoner, "consider them in one point of view, and see how many extravagant suppositions must be advanced, if the resurrection of our Saviour be denied. It must be supposed that the guards, who had been particularly cautioned by their officers, sat down to sleep, and that however, they deserve credit when they said the body of Jesus Christ was stolen; it must be supposed that men who had been imposed on in the most odious and cruel manner in the world, hazarded their dearest enjoyments for the glory of an impostor. It must be supposed that ignorant and illiterate men, who had neither reputation, fortune, or eloquence, possessed the art of fascinating the eyes of all the church. It must be supposed, either that five hundred persons were all deprived of their senses at one time; or that they were deceived in the plainest matter of fact; or that this multitude of false witnesses had found out the secret of not contradicting them-

selves or one another, and being always uniform in their testimony. It must be supposed that the most expert courts of judicature could not find out a shadow of contradiction in palpable imposture. It must be supposed that the apostles, sensible men in other cases, chose precisely those places which were the most unfavorable to their views. It must be supposed that millions madly suffered imprisonment, tortures, and crucifixion, to spread an illusion. It must be supposed that ten thousand miracles were wrought in favor of a falsehood, or all these facts must be denied; and then it must be supposed, that the apostles were idiots, that the enemies of Christianity were idiots, and that all the primitive Christians were idiots. The arguments that persuade us of the truth of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, are so clear and so conclusive that if any difficulty remains, it arises from the brightness of the evidence itself. Yes, I declare, if any thing has shaken my confidence in it, it has arisen from this consideration. I could not conceive how a truth attested by so many irreproachable witnesses, and confirmed by so many notorious miracles, should not make more proselytes; how it could possibly be, that all the Jews, and all the heathens, did not yield to this evidence. But this difficulty ought not to weaken our faith; in the folly of mankind its solution lies. Men are capable of any thing to gratify their passions, and to defend their prejudices; the unbelief of the Jews and the heathen is not more wonderful than a hundred other phenomena, which, were we not to behold them every day, would equally alarm us. The ancient unbelief is not more wonderful than yours, Protestants. You profess to believe there is a judgment and a hell, and to know that misers, adulterers, and drunkards, must suffer everlasting punishment there; and although you cannot be ignorant of your being in this fatal list, yet you are as careless about futurity as if you had read your names in the book of life, and had not reason to doubt of your salvation."

§ 14. From what has been stated on this subject, I trust, my dear Benjamin, it is abundantly evident that we have no reason to doubt the truth of the resurrection of Christ. There is no history, there is no matter of fact which we yet believe firmly, that is established upon evidence half as good. Whoever, therefore, disbelieves it, does it not for want of evidence and sufficient motives of belief, but from a faulty principle and culpable neglect; and such person will find the truth of those words addressed to those who wanted to see a sign from heaven: "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of the prophet Jonas; for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and behold, a greater than Jonas is here." The remainder of this important subject I shall consider in my next letter. And may I myself, and my dear Benjamin, not only believe, but experimentally "know the power of the resurrection of Christ." Amen.

Farewell.

Christ the Lord is risen to day!
Sons of men and angels say:
Raise your joys and triumphs high!
Sing, ye heav'ns—and earth, reply.

Love's redeeming work is done—
Fought the fight, the battle won:
Lo! the sun's eclipse is o'er;
Lo! he sets in blood no more.

LETTER V.

IMPORTANCE OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

Dear Brother,

Having shown that the resurrection of the Messiah was both typified and predicted, and that Jesus Christ did actually rise from the dead; I will now answer but one question or objection relative to this subject, and then show its importance and happy effects.

§ 1. It is asked, "why did not Christ appear to his enemies as well as to his friends?" This might well be considered a question of presumption and blasphemy. "O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" But is it not a common thing for men to find fault with God's work of creation and providence? and why should it be thought strange to hear them find fault with God's dispensations of grace? It is reported by creditable historians, that *Alphonsus*, one of the kings of *Castile*, greatly blamed the dispositions of the frame of nature, and blasphemously said he could have advised the Creator better in adjusting the frame of nature, had he been present at the creation of the world. I will now give you the question in their own words. Celsus, an Epicurean philosopher, who wrote against the Christian religion when in its infancy, says, "If Christ would have in reality his divine power to appear, he ought to have shown himself to his *enemies*, to his *judge*, and absolutely to *all the people*; had he done so, infidelity would have been eradicated, and every one would have believed his own eyes." Orig. Cont. Cel. L. 2, § 63, p. 434. The same objection has been urged by modern philosophers, who have asked, "Why should the credit of the fact depend on the testimony of the *apostles alone*; that

if they had been *enemies*, and unconverted by the miraculous resurrection of Christ, this would have been much better; and he ought to have appeared especially to the *magistrates* and the Jews: that they did not own him as the Messiah, was owing to his not appearing to them after his resurrection." Resur. of Jesus Consid. p. 73.

This objection, my dear Benjamin, has been thought by the enemies of the cross unanswerable. Let us examine it. Our modern infidels say, that "if the apostles had been enemies, and converted by the miraculous resurrection of Christ, this would have been much better." I wonder whether these objectors have ever read the history of Saul of Tarsus; (for no doubt many have these objections against the Bible at the tip of the tongue, who have never read the precious book itself; but have gathered their objections from the writings of a Paine, Hume, or Voltaire;) was not this great champion of the Christian religion an open enemy of Christ and his followers? did he not verily think he was doing God service by persecuting the saints? and was he not converted by seeing Christ after his resurrection? And did not he most zealously preach and defend this fact before Jews and Gentiles, and before the priests and sanhedrim, &c.? Again, upon what authority do these men, who are so cautious to believe nothing but upon unexceptionable evidence, assert "that the Jews did not own him as Messiah, because he did not appear to them after his resurrection? Did the Jews in Christ's time make such an objection? Did they assign this as the reason for not believing the Gospel, when preached by the apostles? Or do our people, at this day, reject Christ because he appeared only to his friends? No such thing; you know better, my dear Benjamin; the same cause which led them to cry, crucify him, crucify him, led them to reject him after his resurrection, and keeps our people still in unbelief. What this cause is, has been stated in former letters, viz. that he did not answer their worldly and carnal expectations, by

delivering them from the galling yoke of the Romans, and raising them in authority over all nations, and leading them on to the accumulation of riches, the enjoyment of pleasure, and so forth. Further, that Epicurean Celsus would not have been satisfied if Christ had not appeared also literally "to all the people." Now, does he mean to all the people in Jerusalem? or in Judea? or in all the world? But suppose he means the former only, all the people in Jerusalem: how was this to be effected? When and where were they to be collected; by what authority, and by what means was the immense multitude to be gathered together? A thousand other difficulties might be suggested, with respect to carrying into effect the measure proposed by these profound philosophers. But suppose all that has been required by Celsus and his unbelieving brethren had been done—that Christ had appeared to the priests, the pharisees, and sanhedrim—how do they know this would have removed the deep-rooted prejudice, and led them to believe that Jesus was risen indeed? May we not rather adopt the manner of reasoning of our father Abraham? "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither would they believe if one rose from the dead." Did not some of the watch come into the city and show unto the chief priests all that was done? and did they believe their testimony? Or when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, did they appoint a committee to investigate the matter? did they express any doubt upon the subject? did they manifest any desire to have any further evidence of the reality of Christ's resurrection? No such thing. But they adopted the foul measure of bribing the soldiers to tell a lie, saying, "Say ye, his disciples came and stole him away while we slept; and if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you." Now, my dear Benjamin, this awful charge against the priests, senate, and rulers, was published by the evangelists at the very time and scene of the transaction; if it had

not been true, why did they not publicly contradict it? Why did they not punish the authors of so heinous a libel, if such it had been? To return to our subject: suppose that Christ had appeared to "all the people," how could they have been assured that it was the same identical person that had been crucified? Must not the faith of most of them have rested on the evidence of the priests, sanhedrims, and pharisees? And is it not more rational to believe that these inveterate enemies of Christ, who had rejected him merely out of malice, because they "would not have this man to reign over them," and who, by now confessing him to be the Christ, would have laid themselves open to the charge of having crucified the Lord of glory, and brought upon themselves the indignation of the people? I say, is it not more rational to believe that such persons, under such circumstances, would rather have hardened their hearts and shut their eyes against the clearest evidence, by adopting the objection of some of our modern infidels, saying, "This is not the identical Jesus; the marks in his hands, and feet, and sides have been made by his disciples to carry on the deception; or he was not quite dead when taken from the cross; or, if it is the same person, and he was really dead, and has actually risen, yet this was not effected by the power of God, but his disciples wrought it by the power of the devil, as he himself performed his miracles? Nay, what security have these objectors that the malicious priests would not have accused both Christ and his apostles of being in league with Beelzebub, the prince of devils, and therefore tried to crucify him again? But let us again suppose, my dear Benjamin, that Christ Jesus had appeared to all, as Celsus and the modern infidels demand; and suppose they had actually believed the truth of his resurrection, how do these objectors know that it would have been "better for the propagation of the Gospel in after-ages?" Would succeeding ages have had better and more convincing evidence than those which we have in the New

Testament? How could they have known that all Jerusalem and Judea had known of a surety that Christ had risen from the dead, but by some written document, and a succession of preachers or believers of the Gospel, or by both; and would that have satisfied our infidel friends? Or would they not probably have objected, "How do we know that these documents are authentic, whether they have not been corrupted, and so forth; whether the whole story is not 'a cunningly devised fable,' a mere production of priest-craft?" Besides, my dear Benjamin, let it be well remembered that the religion of Jesus does not consist merely in the one article of the resurrection of Christ from the dead; but that all that Jesus Christ did, and taught, and suffered, was to be published to the world by eye-witnesses, well qualified for the arduous and all-important work. The gracious and benevolent design of the Son of God, to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, as well as to be the glory of his people Israel, could not have been effected in the manner proposed by infidels; for neither the priests, the sanhedrim, the pharisees, and all the people of Jerusalem together, although they had believed the history and fact of the resurrection of Christ, were well qualified for the task; for they had neither heard all that Jesus taught from the beginning, nor seen all the miracles that he had wrought; nor had they the power to confirm what they knew and believed by miracle; and above all, they needed the illumination and influence of the Holy Spirit. The plan, therefore, adopted by our blessed Jesus, was the best and most effectual.

It was briefly this: "As soon as he commenced his ministry he chose twelve persons, to be almost his constant companions, in order to be witnesses to the sanctity of his life, to the miracles he wrought, and to the instructions he gave. And as his resurrection from the dead was one of those miraculous events that was intended, among many other reasons, to be the evidence of his divine mission; so

he chose to make his apostles witnesses thereof; gave them a spiritual understanding, to understand the Scriptures; instructed them for forty days from the time of his resurrection till the time of his ascension into heaven, in the things pertaining to the kingdom of God; and on the day of Pentecost he sent forth the Holy Spirit, in a more copious manner, to qualify them to preach the Gospel in foreign languages, which they had never known before; and to confirm their doctrines by miracles. Hence, when the Gospel was first preached by Peter, in the house of Cornelius, he says, in the beginning of his sermon, "The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ; (he is Lord of all;) that word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were possessed of the devil, for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did, both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; him they slew, and hanged upon a tree; him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly; not unto all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he who is ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead." Acts, 10 : 36–42.

§ 2. I will now endeavor, my beloved Benjamin, to point out to you the important truth taught by the resurrection of Christ. First—It proves the reality of his being the Son of God. The apostle says that Christ, by his resurrection, was declared to be the Son of God; Rom. 1 : 4; for in reading the history of Christ, you will observe that the priests and rulers of our people tried, in a variety of ways, to find a cause to justify themselves in putting him to death, but could not find any; at last, Jesus being abjured by the

high priest, by the living God, to tell whether he was the Son of God, and having answered in the affirmative, they condemned him for blasphemy, because he had said he was the Son of God. "Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He has spoken blasphemy, what further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death." Math. 26: 15, 16. Hence, when Christ was hanging on the cross, they derided and mocked him, saying, "He trusted in God, let him deliver him now, if he will have him; for he said, I am the Son of God." Math. 27: 43. Now, this being the crime which was charged upon him, and for which he was crucified and put to death, God, by raising him from the dead, gave evidence that he was no blasphemer, but the Son of God. Hence, said the apostle, he was justified by the spirit. Tim. 3: 16. The Spirit gave testimony to him at his baptism, and by the mighty works done by him in his life time; but he was most eminently and remarkably justified by the Holy Spirit, by his resurrection from the dead. God hereby bearing him witness that he was unjustly condemned, and that he assumed nothing to himself but what of right did belong to him, when he said he was the Son of God. For how could a man that was condemned to die for calling himself the Son of God, be more remarkably vindicated and more clearly proved to be so, than by being raised from the dead by the power of God? For it is not conceivable that God should put forth an almighty power to raise him, and thereby authorize his usurpation, if by robbery he had assumed that glorious title. It was upon this evidence Thomas adored him as his Lord and God.

§ 3. In the next place I would observe, that the resurrection of Jesus Christ proved to a demonstration that he was the promised Messiah. Hence, when the Jews asked of him a sign, he referred them to his resurrection. John 2: 18, 19. Math. 18: 38, 39. Had Christ been an impostor, the

apostles instead of saying "it was impossible that he should be holden in death," (Acts, 2: 24,) would rather have said, it was impossible for him to escape; for neither could he have raised himself nor would God have raised him. Mahomed promised to rise after four days, but his followers were obliged to bury him. None of the false Christs, though there have been many, have risen again. You remember, my dear Benjamin, I have mentioned in a former letter the case of him who called himself *Bar Cochar*, the son of a star, giving himself out to be the Messiah, and promised to rise again; but as he did not perform his promise, his followers called him *Bar Cosbi*, i. e. the son of a lie. In like manner, if Jesus had not risen from the dead, I should not hesitate to call him an impostor and deceiver. For I have already shown that it was typified and predicted that the Messiah should not see corruption, but rise again on the third day; and Jesus himself had repeatedly foretold his resurrection. Hence you perceive the great importance of this article of our holy religion. Therefore said the apostle "This is the word of faith which we speak, that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in thine heart that God has raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For he that believeth that Jesus rose from the dead, does believe the other articles of religion which are well confirmed by this. He that believeth that Jesus is risen, does at the same time believe him to be the Christ, and consequently, that his precepts are divine, that his promises are certain, and his power and authority uncontrollable.

§ 4. The resurrection of Christ is a satisfactory proof that his death was an acceptable sacrifice to God his Father, and regarded by him as a propitiation for the sins of the world. It not only shows that Christ finished all he had engaged to do, and paid every farthing of debt, but that the Father had accepted of it. His law is magnified, justice satisfied, and the prisoner released Had Christ not been liberated

from the prison of the grave, we could have had no evidence that our debt was discharged. But his resurrection clearly proved that he had satisfied the demands of law and justice, and affords us a ground of assured hope and triumphant exaltation. Rom. 4 : 20 ; 8 : 34. In his death, Christ suffered as a malefactor, and did undertake the guilt of our sins ; but by his resurrection, he was justified, i. e. declared to the world that he had shaken off all that guilt, and left it, as it were, in the grave, with his grave-clothes.

§ 5. Observe again, my dear Benjamin, that the resurrection of Christ shows the possibility of a general resurrection ; is an assurance to the people of God of the certainty of their rising from the dead ; and is the glorious pattern, as well as the sure pledge, of what kind their resurrection shall be. That God is able to raise the dead, sound reason and philosophy will not deny. But if it were doubtful, one certain and evident instance of it will be sufficient to answer all objections ; since facts are irresistible evidences of the truth and certainty of things. By the resurrection of Christ, therefore, God has in a most satisfactory manner demonstrated the possibility of the thing, and given us an assurance that all believers shall rise too. Hence, saith the apostle, "Christ has risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept ; as the first man was of the earth, earthy ; so the second man was the Lord from heaven," not of an earthly nature, but a heavenly original ; and "as the earthy man was, such also are those that are earthy," of the same frail materials with him from whom they are derived ; so also, "as is the heavenly man, such also are those which are heavenly," the state of their bodies shall be of a heavenly form and constitution like his. "As we have the image of the earthy," have been subject to the infirmities of this frail earthly body, "so shall we bear also the image of the heavenly," be transformed and fashioned in our bodies "like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself." 1 Cor.

15. Phil. 3, 21. As our blessed Lord rose to an immortal life, and his body was transformed into a very glorious state and appearance, to fit him for that heavenly world where he now resides; so we know that "when Christ who is our life shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is," and be in our bodies transformed into "the same image, from glory to glory." Believers know and feel, and may you, my dear Benjamin, know it too, that they have passed from death unto life, and are united to their Savior by a living faith, as really as the members are to the body, and the body to the head; and is it conceivable that he should leave any of his saints, the members of his body, under the power of death? If Moses, the deliverer of our fathers from the tyranny of Pharaoh, would not suffer any thing, not an hoof "to remain in the house of bondage," will our great Redeemer be less perfect in his work? shall our last enemy always retain his spoils, our bodies, in the grave? This would greatly reflect on his love, his power, and faithfulness. His promise is, "I live, and ye shall live also." John, 14: 19. Oh, my dear brother, how consoling and supporting is the thought of a risen and a living Savior, under all the afflictions and troubles, perils and uncertainties of the present life, and in the nearest view and approach of death! Believers in Christ may say, as the sea we traverse may have its storms, but he calms them, and speaks them into peace. We may sometimes be uncertain where to direct our course; but if that heavenly pilot steer our bark, we shall not wander wide of the place we aim at. Dangers may encompass, but his power can protect us. Enemies may distress us, but through him that strengthens us, we shall become superior to them. The risen and exalted Jesus is a compassionate and "merciful High Priest, ready to save to the uttermost," and, by office and inclination, ready to succor us in every time of need. O, my beloved Benjamin, may you have a "good hope through grace," may Christ be precious" to thy soul, "as he is to

all them that believe." Then, whatever are thy burdens and afflictions of life, whatever thy cares, anxieties, and sorrows, you need not sink under them. Better things wait for thee. The scene here, however uncomfortable, shall soon pass away. Death, which is the *curse* of *bad* men, shall be thy blessing; and what is the commencement of their misery, shall be to thee the beginning of endless peace and happiness. Remember that Jesus, though crucified and slain, lives at the right hand of God. May you, my beloved brother, be able to join in the doxology of the apostle to the circumcision, saying, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, has begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. 1 Pet. 1 : 3–5.

§ 6. Having already detained you so long, I will make but one observation more, viz. The resurrection of our blessed Lord is a powerful motive to imitate him in purity of heart and universal holiness of conversation, and to walk before God in all newness of life. The remembrance of this great event should put us in mind of the obligation we are under to separate ourselves from the corruption of the world; to subdue our sinful passions, and to forsake our former sins; to "yield ourselves to God, as those who are alive from the dead;" to do the things that are acceptable to him; to live a spiritual and divine life; and as "risen with Christ, to seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God; and to set our affections on things which are above, and not on things on the earth; that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we may also appear with him in glory." Col. 3 : 1–4. The same direction the apostle gives to the church at Rome, saying, "Know ye not that so many of us as were

baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also shall walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Rom. 6 : 3–6. On this passage the pious and learned Dr. John Edwards, a Pedo-baptist, has the following remark: "In the fourth verse we have a most appropriate and elegant similitude, which is to this effect: The *immersion* or *plunging* into the water, *which was then used in baptism*, represents to us the death and burial of Christ; and by this symbol is also signified, that those who were baptized, and, as it were, buried under the water, undertook to die unto sin, and to all carnal inclinations; for that is to be buried with Christ, and to be baptized into his death. And then on the other hand, the coming out of the baptismal water represents unto us the resurrection of Christ; and also that we ought to rise unto righteousness, and a holy and godly life. The similitude and analogy are exact, and therefore made use of by the apostle in other places. Col. 2 : 12. Christ's resurrection is an hieroglyphic of our spiritual rising out of the grave of sin; it is a fit emblem of our rising to newness of life."

Having, at considerable length, shown that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures, I propose, by divine permission, to show next, that Christ hath also ascended up into heaven, according to the Scriptures.

Farewell.

LETTER VI.

THE ASCENSION OF THE MESSIAH.

My Dear Benjamin,

Having shown that Messiah was to rise from the dead, and that Jesus Christ did rise, according to the Scriptures; I will now show that the Messiah was to ascend into heaven, as the second part of his exaltation; and that Jesus Christ has actually entered heaven, which is to be considered as an additional proof that he is the true Messiah. By the ascension of the Messiah, I mean not a metaphysical or figurative, but a real translation of his body and soul, after his resurrection from the dead, into heaven, the dwelling-place of Jehovah.

§ 1. The ascension of the Messiah, like his resurrection, was both typified and predicted. We notice the translation of Enoch and Elijah. The one during the patriarchal period, before the giving of the law; the other in the days of the prophets, after the giving of the law. Enoch was a man that walked with God and held communion with him, and he was not on the earth, for God took him from thence to heaven, both in body and soul. Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind, in a chariot, on horses of fire, whilst he and Elisha were conversing together. Gen. 5: 24; 2 Kings, 2: 11.

The carrying of the ark from the house of Obed-Edom up unto the city of Zion, is another type of the ascension of the Messiah into heaven. In the Mosaic ritual, the ark was the most striking symbol of the Messiah. For, like him, it was the seat of Deity, the token of the divine presence, the appointed medium of maintaining intercourse with Jehovah, of approaching him, and of beholding his glory.

The removing of this ark by David to the hill of Zion was an event of peculiar solemnity, and was celebrated with great fervor and devotion. Amongst the various Psalms of thanksgiving composed and sung on that occasion, was most probably the 24th; but it rises far above the types, and points to the ascension of Messiah. "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty; the Lord, mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah."

The high priest, entering within the veil into the most holy place, was a most instructive type of the ascension of the Messiah. You know, my dear brother, that our people consider the three different apartments of the tabernacle and the temple to have a typical representation; the first represented this present world; the second, the firmament; and the third, the most holy place, the heaven of heavens; therefore as the high priest, on the day of atonement, went into the most holy place, with the blood of the sin-offering; so was Messiah to enter heaven, the most holy place, with the blood of his own sacrifice. See Joseph, L. 5. c. 8.

§ 2. It was also predicted, as well as typified, that Messiah should ascend into heaven. We have already shown that in Psalm 16 : 10, the resurrection of the Messiah was foretold; and in the next verse, David being a prophet, speaks of the ascension of the Messiah, saying, "thou wilt show me the path of life; in thy presence is fullness of joy, and at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

The 47th Psalm, 5th verse, is another prediction of the same fact: "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet." Both Kimchi and Aben Ezra apply the passage to the Messiah, and it has been fully fulfilled in Jesus Christ, as will be shown presently.

Another prediction of the kind is in Ps. 68 : 18; "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell amongst them." This Psalm was occasioned by the removal of the ark into Solomon's temple. Jehovah is here described by his magnificent retinue; "even thousands of angels;" by his triumphant ascension into heaven, and by his being the author of salvation. The whole of this description is applicable to the Messiah, and to none else, and was fulfilled in Jesus Christ, who made an end of sin, abolished death, spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly; and, having done so, went up and entered heaven as a triumphant conqueror, and sent down the Holy Spirit with all his gifts and powers. I would name another Psalm, viz. 110 : 1. "The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." In a former letter, it has been shown that our rabbins applied this prophecy to the Messiah, and I shall endeavor to show its fulfillment in Jesus Christ. It denotes the exaltation of the Messiah, his great power and authority, his being crowned as kings and priests are for their people, whom they govern, or for whom they intercede.

Another remarkable prediction, respecting the ascension of the Messiah, is Dan. 7 : 13, 14; "I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days; and they brought him near before him, and there were given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall never be destroyed." That the Messiah is here intended by the Son of Man, is acknowledged by many of the rabbins. Zohar. Gen. fo. 35 : 4. Yarchi, Saadiah Goan, in loco. R. Joshua in Ezra, in loco. Zeror Ham. Sanhed. Medrish Tillim, Ps. 21 : 7. Hence *anani*, which signifies clouds, is one of the names of the

Messiah. Targum on 1 Chro. 3:24. Ber. Rab. Gen. 28:10.

I will name but one prediction more, viz. Micah, 2:13; "The breaker is come up before them, they have broken up, and have passed through the gate, and are gone out by it, and their King shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them." Both our ancient and modern rabbins apply this passage to the Messiah. Avcoth Rochel, Mos. Haddarshan. Gen. 40:9. Ber. Rab. Gen. 44:18. Gal. de Arcam's, c. 5, b. 8, c. 23.

The Lord Jesus Christ himself frequently spake of his ascension into heaven. When our people were offended with Christ, because he had said that his flesh was the true manna which came down from heaven, Jesus replied, "What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before?" John 6:62, i. e. will that convince you that I did not speak of my body literally? for that is not to be eaten, but must ascend on high. Again, he says, "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." John, 16:28. And on the day of his resurrection he said, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God." John, 20:17.

§ 3. I shall now proceed to show, that Jesus Christ did ascend into heaven, agreeably to the foregoing types and predictions. This is evident from plain Scripture declarations. The ascension of Jesus is sometimes called going away, John, 14:7; sometimes his being exalted, Acts, 2:23; sometimes his being made higher than the heavens, Heb. 7:26; and sometimes his entering within the veil, Heb. 6 17, 20; all which are but so many synonymous phrases, expressing his ascension, in a very pleasant variety.

The reality of the ascension of Christ is testified by credible witnesses. Many of the disciples of Jesus saw him ascending. The evangelist Luke says, "And he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifted up his hands and blessed them; and it came to pass while he blessed them, he was

parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy." Chap. 24 : 50–52. Again, "When he had spoken these things, while they beheld he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Acts, 1 : 9–11. Thus Christ ascended in the presence of his disciples. Earthly monarchs display their glory before the eyes of as many as possible, and conceal disgrace. Christ, on the contrary, made all witnesses of his sufferings and ignominious death; but at his transfiguration he took only three of his disciples, and forbade to tell the rest. After his resurrection he appeared only to his disciples, and poured out his Spirit on the day of Pentecost on the disciples only. They did not see him when he rose, but they saw him when he ascended; because no eye-witness was necessary to the act of his resurrection, but it was necessary to the act of his ascension. It was sufficient that Christ showed himself to his apostles alive, after his sufferings, for they knew that he was dead, and now saw him alive, and therefore were sure that he must have risen. But as his sitting at the right hand of God was not designed to be visible on the earth, therefore it was necessary that they should be eye-witnesses of the act of his ascension. Whilst Stephen, the proto-martyr, was suffering, looking steadfastly to heaven, he saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and at the same time declared to the Jews that he saw the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God. Acts, 7 : 55, 56.

§ 4. We have also the testimony of holy angels, as we have just seen from Acts, 1 : 10, 11. The disciples, although they saw him ascending, yet could not tell whether he had ac-

tually entered heaven; therefore, two of the heavenly inhabitants were dispatched to assure them that he actually had entered heaven. When God brought his first-born into the world, he said, "Let all the angels of God worship him." Hence, at his birth, a multitude of angels were praising God, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Luke, 2:14. And when Jesus had finished the work of redemption, he returned again to his Father, with no less demonstration of joy amongst the blessed angels, agreeably to Ps. 47:5. Then also was fulfilled Daniel's prediction, when the Son of Man was introduced by the shouts of angels to the Ancient of Days, who, to express his welcome to Christ, gave him glory and a kingdom.

We have also the testimony of the Holy Spirit, who was expressly promised by Christ to be poured out for the purpose of testifying of him, as will be shown hereafter.

§ 5. I might further observe, that the destruction of Jerusalem, and the consequent dispersion of our nation, is a standing proof of the ascension of Jesus into heaven; for, on different occasions, Jesus foretold that this should follow his ascension. John, 7:34. "Then said Jesus unto them, yet a little while I am with you, and then I go unto him that sent me; ye shall seek me, and shall not find me." Again, ch. 8:21. But having already written largely on this subject in a former letter, page 296, I shall pass on to consider the act itself, viz.

§ 6. The circumstances connected with the ascension of Christ.

With regard to the manner of Christ's ascension, I would observe, that it was not in appearance only, but in reality and truth, visibly and locally, a real removal of his body from earth to heaven, in a sudden, swift, glorious, and triumphant manner. Enoch was translated, but we have no account of the manner. Elijah was taken up in a fiery chariot, suited to the fiery dispensation under which he lived;

but Christ was taken up in a bright cloud. A cloud is often used in Scripture in display of God's presence and glory.

§ 7. The time of the ascension is expressly mentioned, Acts, 1 : 3, 11, 17; "When also he showed himself alive, after his passion, by many infallible proofs; being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." It was proper and necessary that he should remain some time with his disciples, both to give them full evidence of his resurrection, and farther particulars in the things belonging to his kingdom. As Hezekiah was to set his house in order before he died, so Christ would not ascend into heaven till he had set all at rights on earth. Christ would have his house well governed after his ascension, and therefore staid the required time to give full directions. Moses was forty days upon the mount, and his face shone; Elijah fasted forty days, and was taken up into heaven; and Christ was with his disciples forty days after his resurrection, and then ascended into heaven. We notice, the *place from* whence he ascended was mount Olivet, near to Bethany. He chose a high and convenient place, to convince his disciples of the truth and reality of his ascension. He had not withdrawn himself secretly, as at other times, but in open view. In the garden of Gethsemane, near to this mount, his pains and troubles began, and from thence he went to the cross, and from the same mount he ascended into glory. How often does the Lord make the place that has been the scene of sorrow, to be the first step to our rising and advancement.

As on a mount he frequently preached and prayed, was transfigured and crucified, so at last he ascended from a mount. This is the place which he had so often honored, in the days of his humiliation; and it was not unfit, therefore, that his exaltation should commence there also. The place to which he ascended was the heaven of heavens, the innermost sanctuary of the Divine Majesty. The flight was to the house of God, to the seat of bliss and consummate glory.

See the following passages of Scripture, 1 Tim. 3 : 16. Heb. 4 : 14. 7 : 26. 9 : 8, 9, 24. 10 : 19, 20.

§ 8. Another circumstance connected with the ascension of Christ, is his employment at the time, which is described by the evangelist Luke in the words just quoted. Whilst Jesus was in the very act of blessing his disciples, he was parted from them. It is the privilege of the righteous, not only to die blessed, but even whilst blessing others. Both dying Jacob, and dying Moses, blessed the ten tribes of Israel; so Christ, when he left his disciples, blessed them. "Having loved his own, he loved them to the end." John, 13 : 1. As the great design of our Savior's coming into the world was to be a public blessing to his people, so blessing was the last thing he did for them, and that either by conferring blessedness upon them, as a divine person, or else by praying for a blessing for them, as man; whereby he gave them a specimen of the work in which he is engaged in heaven, where he ever lives to make intercession for them. It is further noticed, that "he lifted up his hands and blessed them." The ancient manner of blessing others, was sometimes by the laying on of the hands, as Jacob did when he blessed the sons of Joseph, Gen. 48 : 11; at other times, when many persons were to be blessed, it was by lifting up hands, as Aaron is said "to lift up his hands towards the people, and bless them." Lev. 9 : 22. So Christ, the High Priest of our profession, blessed his apostles with uplifted hands.

§ 9. I will now proceed, my dear Benjamin, to point out the design of Christ's ascension. We may consider it as a testimony of his Messiahship and the acceptance of his work. We have already seen that it was both typified and predicted that Messiah was to ascend into heaven; it was therefore necessary for Jesus Christ to ascend into heaven, as well as to have died and risen from the dead, according to the Scriptures. It also proved the perfection and acceptance of his work; as the discharge of the debtor

from prison, proves that the creditor is satisfied, so Christ's resurrection was a proof that the law of God was perfectly satisfied, and God well pleased; and his ascension gives a further degree of assurance. Had Christ been an unfaithful servant, and not done his work to the perfect satisfaction of his Father, the justice of God would not have permitted him to be taken out of the grave, much less to be exalted to heaven and glory.

The infinite wisdom of God would never have entrusted him with all power in heaven and on earth, to act as the Mediator in heaven, if he had not been faithful in the management of what had been before committed to him; because, if he had been unfaithful in one, there was no ground to think that he would be faithful in the other. But it is a strong argument that he will be exact in the glorious part of his charge in heaven, since he has been exact in the ignominious part of his work on earth. It is because he is a faithful Witness, that he is the "Prince of the kings of the earth." Rev. 1 : 5. It is this argument the Spirit uses to convince the world of the righteousness of his person, and the righteousness of his mediation, that there is a full expiation of sin, because he is received and entertained by the Father. John, 16 : 10.

§ 11. It was expedient that Christ should be rewarded for his humiliation. Reason as well as revelation would teach us, that Christ, in order to perform the engagements and bear the heavy loads appertaining to the work of redemption, would need more than common support. The difficultites he had to encounter required a joy to be set before him, and a joy which should not be at a remote distance, but placed immediately in view; something which should succor him in the day of tribulation, and afford the certainty that he should have "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." All this was to be derived from the prospect of an immediate victory over death, and the full possession of

life and glory; he was to receive all power in heaven and on earth, and reign as Lord of all. It is evident from the Holy Scripture that he derived support from this source. David as a prophet having foretold the resurrection of the Messiah, continues to speak of his ascension also, saying, "Thou wilt show me the path of life; in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Psa. 16 : 11.

The apostle, in exhorting Christians to run their spiritual race, directed them to imitate the example of Christ, saying, "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Heb. 12 : 2.

§ 12. Another end to be answered by the ascension of Christ, was to triumph over his enemies. My dear Benjamin will remember, that in the prediction contained in Psa. 68, it is said that Messiah should lead "captivity captive;" and the apostle assures us this was fulfilled at the ascension of Jesus: in his epistle to the Ephesians, ch. 4 : 8, and in writings to the Colossians, he says, "Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." Col. 2 : 15. In these words there is evidently an allusion to the solemn triumphs of princes: after having obtained some remarkable and complete victory, they made a public triumphal show, rode through the streets in the greatest state, and had all their spoils carried before them, and the kings and nobles whom they had taken they tied to their chariots, and led them as captives. In like manner, Christ spoiled his enemies on the cross, conquered them at his resurrection, and openly triumphed over them at his ascension. He overcame the world, bound the devil, and spoiled hell, weakened sin, destroyed death, and triumphed over the grave.

§ 13. To carry on the work of Mediator, was another end of Christ's ascension into heaven, both as it respects

his priestly and kingly office, for he was to be a "priest upon his throne." Zech. 6 : 13. Respecting his kingly office, I shall write to you in a future letter, my present observation relates to his priestly office only. I have observed in the commencement of this letter, that the Levitical high priest, entering the most holy place with the blood of atonement, sprinkling it on the mercy seat, was typical of Messiah's entering into heaven with the blood of his own sacrifice; and this was fulfilled at the ascension of Christ: "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Heb. 9 : 24. As the high priest entered on the behalf of the people, with the names of the twelve tribes on his breast and shoulders, so Christ has entered heaven in behalf of all his people, bearing the memorial of every saint on his heart.

Had Christ remained on earth, he would not have done the whole work of a high priest. It was not enough for the legal high priest to slay and pour out the blood of the sacrifice in the outward tabernacle, and offer it upon the altar on the day of expiation; but he was to pass within the veil, to present the blood of the victim to the Lord, and sprinkle it towards the mercy-seat, and upon his return to publish the atonement and reconciliation to the people; so that there would have been no analogy between the type and the antitype, if our Savior, after his oblation on earth, had not, in the quality of a priest, passed into the heavens, as through the veil which separated the heavenly sanctuary from the outward court. The legal priest was also to burn incense; by insence, in Scripture, is frequently meant prayer; this also made it necessary for Christ to ascend up into heaven. Intercession is a great part of his priestly office, as will be shown hereafter, and could no more have been performed except in heaven, than the oblation, the first part of his office, could have been performed any where but on earth.

§ 14. The descent of the Holy Ghost, with all his gifts and

graces, was another great end and design of Christ's ascension into heaven. We have already seen that it was predicted that Messiah was to ascend, that he "might receive gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell amongst them." Psa. 68 : 18. The same was foretold by the prophets, Isa. 32 : 15; 44 : 3. Joel, 2 : 28, 32. I have also shown, that the Lord Jesus Christ repeatedly told his disciples that it was necessary for him to return to his Father, else the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, would not descend; and after his resurrection he again said to them, "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you : but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Luke, 24 : 49. Accordingly, on the day of Pentecost, the Spirit of the Lord descended, in a most copious manner, upon the disciples, enduing them with miraculous powers, and communicating remarkable gifts and graces to the believers in general. The apostle, speaking on the subject, says, "When he ascended up on high he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some pastors and teachers." Eph. 4 : 8–11.

The giving of the Spirit depended on the glorification of Christ as Jesus, a Savior. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believed on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.") John, 7 : 37–39. The Spirit was not given in that eminency and fullness of gifts and graces till the glorification of Christ, wherein he absolutely received the keys of all the treasures of his Father, as well as the

keys of hell and death. God would reserve those gifts for the triumphal coronation of his Son, as an evidence of the peace which was made by him, by the effusion of the richest treasures of God. Thus, when Christ had taken our flesh to heaven, he sent his Spirit, as an earnest of our glory. 2 Cor. 5 : 5. God never taketh any thing away from his children, but he sendeth them a better thing in the room of it.

§ 15. I would further observe, in the words of Jesus himself, that it was *expedient* that he should go to the Father, to prepare places for his people. Heaven was prepared from the foundation of the world, by the decree of the Father, Mat. 25 : 34; but, because we are to hold heaven not only by gift but by purchase, Christ came from heaven to procure it, and went to heaven again to prepare it. As our head, he went to seize upon it in our right; as our legal head, he possesses heaven in our name, as a guardian takes up lands for the heir. And as our mystical head and author of grace, he dispenseth the Spirit and maketh us fit for that place; and making intercession for us, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me," John, 17 : 24; Christ speaks as if he were not content without his people. The apostle, in writing to the Hebrews, informs them that Christ has entered heaven as our "Fore-runner," to make way for us—as our harbinger, to take up rooms and lodging for us. He is gone to fit all things for our entertainment, as Joseph was sent into Egypt to prepare for his father Jacob. His ascension is a pledge of ours. It is the meritorious, efficient cause and example of our ascension into heaven.

§ 16. Another end of Christ's ascension was to open a new source of encouragement to the pentitent sinner, and of consolation and support to the people of God. What greater encouragement could possibly be given to the poor, trembling, penitent sinner, who inquires what to do to be saved, than to

direct him to Jesus, "whom God has exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Acts, 5 : 31. If, when nailed to the accursed tree, he was able to save the penitent thief, how much more now, seeing that he ever liveth to make intercession for us. "Wherefore," saith the apostle, "he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb. 7 : 25. The ascension of Christ ought to be the great solace of the people of God, in all the distresses of the present evil world. It ought to be so to us, because we are encouraged by Christ's example to endure with patience whatever is afflictive to us. We have heard of the patience and sufferings, the bitter agony and passion of our Lord; and we have seen the end of the Lord; we know what was the issue and event of those dreadful things which he endured. Affliction was his passage to glory. His humiliation and abasement ushered in his advancement and exaltation. From this consideration we may be encouraged to banish all despair, and not be dejected in the lowest condition. Poverty may make way for our promotion, sickness and disease for a happy state of body, disgrace may be designed to enhance our future felicity, and make our crown of glory more massy and weighty; for the apostle assures us that "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." 2 Cor. 4 : 17. Whilst in this world, and surrounded by enemies, how consoling the thought of having a friend and advocate in heaven. Christ is gone to disannul all Satan's accusations. The sacrifice was slain without, but the intercession was made by the high priest in the most holy place. "If any man sin," says the apostle, "we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." 1 John, 2 : 1. Take away the intercession of Christ and you starve the hope of the saints. Christ is our friend at the court of heaven, on purpose to transact all our affairs,

and as a surety for the peace between God and us. Having detained you already so long, my dear Benjamin, I will notice but one more end or design of Christ's ascension; viz.

§ 17. To draw the affections of his people from earth to heaven. When Christ was speaking of his death, he said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." John, 12 : 32. If these words were true of his crucifixion, how powerful ought they to be in reference to his ascension. When the Lord would take Elijah up into heaven, Elisha said unto him, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee." 2 Kings, 2 : 2. When Christ is ascended up on high, we must follow him with the wings of our meditation and the chariots of our affections. Hence, says the apostle, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, and not on things on earth." Col. 3 : 1, 2. Let us no longer grovel upon the earth, but mount upward and soar aloft in devout contemplation and fruition of our ascended Lord. Where our treasure is; where our head, our bridegroom, our Savior is; there let our hearts be also. We ought to make every place a mount *Olivet;* every where, by pious thoughts and ejaculations, raise up ourselves to heaven, and to hold correspondence with the glorious Redeemer, and with "the spirits of the just made perfect."

Now, my dear Benjamin, from what has been said respecting the ascension of Christ, you will easily perceive the privilege of being united to him by faith, as the members are united to the body, and the body to the head. The sure hope of being with Christ at death is sufficient to support us under all afflictions. Now, when a child of God dieth, he dies but to go to his Father in heaven; for Christ and believers have the same relation. "I ascend to my Father, and your Father; to my God, and your God." John, 20 : 17. As Christ was the Son of God by nature, they

are the sons of God by grace; and when they die they go to their heavenly Father, to a sweet rest, to the bosom of God. The same entertainment which Christ has, we shall have; a joyful entertainment, a sweet welcome, when we come to heaven, conducted thither by holy angels. The beggar died, and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. God will take us, as it were, by the hand, saying, "Well done, good and faithful servants; ye have been faithful over a few things, I will make you rulers over many things: enter ye into the joy of your Lord." Matt. 25: 21. May this be our happy lot, and the glory be unto Him who "bore our sins in his own body on the tree," but is now exalted above all praise, honor and glory. Amen.

Farewell.

LETTER VII.

THE INTERCESSION OF THE MESSIAH.

Dear Brother Benjamin,

Permit me to invite your attention to the intercession of the Messiah as the third step of his exaltation.

§ 1. That the Messiah was to make intercession for his people was taught emblematically, typically, and prophetically; Abel's blood speaking after his death, Melchizedeck blessing Abraham, Abraham interceding for Sodom, Joseph for his brethren, and Moses for Israel, were so many emblems of Messiah interceding for his people.

The entrance of the high priest into the most holy place on the day of atonement, was an eminent type of the Mes-

siah's entering into heaven to intercede for his people. As the high priest was to kill the sacrifice, then enter the most holy place with its blood, and sprinkle it on the mercy-seat, and kindle the incense; so the Messiah was first to offer himself a sacrifice, then to enter heaven, to present his precious blood and kindle the incense of his prayer, as our intercessor, and thus complete the atonement. With respect to the high priest, thus saith the Lord: "Then shall he kill the goat of the sin-offering that is for the people, and bring his blood within the veil, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy-seat, and before the mercy-seat. And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goes in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation." Lev. 16: 15, 17.

It was also taught prophetically; for thus it is written, Psa. 2: 8, "Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." And Isaiah saith, 53: 12, "He made intercession for the transgressors."

§ 2. That Jesus Christ also made intercession, is declared by the apostles in many places. Two or three may suffice. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Rom. 8: 34. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb. 7: 25. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous." 1 John, 2: 1.

§ 3. With respect to the nature of Christ's intercession, I would observe,

1st. That he appears in heaven *for us*, Heb. 9: 24; as a *public* person, in his own nature and in ours; as Media-

tor and surety; as Judah did for Benjamin, and Paul for Onesimus. His very presence in heaven as our *Head* and *Redeemer*, is a strong plea in our behalf. It shows that God is fully satisfied with his performance, and therefore has exalted him to the honor and reward promised in the covenant of redemption.

2d. He presents himself before God as Mediator, with body and soul which he offered upon the cross; with the marks in his hands, feet, and side. Heb. 12:24. Rev. 5:6. His blood is of constant efficacy, a continual intercession. Our fathers were obliged to renew their sacrifices continually, to obtain fresh blood to present it to God; but the blood of Christ is ever the same, ever fresh and new, and will never lose its value and efficacy. Heb. 9:25, 26; 10:10–12.

3d. Christ declares it to be his will that the blessings of his purchase shall be conferred on his people. Of this he has given us a specimen and pledge in his prayer, recorded John, 17:24, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." Christ here pleads that his people may be put in full possession of all the blessings which were purchased for them by the shedding of his blood. He reminds his Father, as it were, of the mutual covenant agreement—of his having performed the condition required on his part; and claims the performance of his Father's promise, as a debt due to his meritorious obedience even unto death.

§ 4. The foundation of Christ's intercession is the atonement which he made for sin. As the high priest went into the most holy place with the blood of the sacrifice, so Christ first offered the sacrifice, then pleads it. There could be no intercession without a sacrifice going before. The condition of his covenant was his death; by it the blessings were procured, and now he pleads that they may be conferred. Propitiation is the payment, intercession is the plea; the one by his death, the other by his life; the one on earth,

the other in heaven. The connection of the intercession and death of Christ, like that of the superstructure and the foundation, is beautifully described by the apostle Paul: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for this he did once, when he offered up himself." Heb. 7: 25–27.

§ 5. The objects of Christ's intercession are the same for whom he made satisfaction. He intercedes for all his people, for all who do now believe in him, and love him, and all that shall believe in him hereafter. John, 17: 9, 20; "I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word."

§ 6. The blessings for which Christ intercedes, are the same that he has procured by his obedience and sufferings even unto death, that their persons and services might be accepted; Eph. 1: 6, "accepted in the beloved;" Gen. 4: 4, "God had respect unto Abel." To be justified freely, i. e. to be *treated* as if they had never sinned, and therefore not punished; and as if they had kept the whole law, and therefore receive eternal life as the "free gift of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Jer. 23: 6; Rom. 6: 31; 8: 33, 34; 2 Cor. 5: 21. As if Christ had said, "Lord, these are the persons for whom I lived and died, deal with them as if they had not sinned, but obeyed." He also intercedes that their services may be accepted, and their prayers heard. While the high priest was offering incense, the people prayed without. Luke, 1: 10. This was typical of Christ's intercession. His pleading gives efficacy to his people's prayers. John, 16: 26, 27; 1 Pet. 2: 5; Rev. 8: 3. Those

who made their addresses to king Admetus, brought the prince with them in their arms. As Joseph charged his brethren that they should not see his face unless they brought Benjamin their brother with them, so we cannot see God's face unless we bring Jesus, our elder brother, with us. When Herod was displeased with the men of Tyre, they made Blastus, the king's chamberlain, their friend. Acts, 12 : 20. My dear Benjamin, I wish I could make you feel the importance of this particular. Prayer is to the soul what food is to the body. Christ's intercession is our greatest encouragement to come to a throne of grace. Heb. 4 : 14–16. Christ not only presents his own prayer, but as it were prays over our prayers. Rev. 8 : 3, "Another angel came, having a golden censer," &c. This angel was Christ. He takes the golden censer of his merits and puts our prayers into it, and with incense of his intercession makes our prayers ascend into heaven, as a sweet perfume. It is said, Lev. 16 : 16, "Aaron shall make atonement for the holy place." This was typical, to show that our holy duties need an atonement. Our best services, as they come from us, are mixed with corruption, as wine that tastes of the cask. Isa. 64 : 6. But Christ purifies and sweetens them, mixing the sweet odor of his intercession with them, and thus God accepts and crowns them. As the fan winnows the chaff from the wheat, so Christ's intercession separates the chaff that mixes with our prayers. As the mother that takes from her child the nosegay designed for the father, and separates the nettles from the flowers, so Christ separates the imperfections from our prayers and services. Another part of Christ's intercession is,

§ 7. That all necessary blessings may be bestowed, such as pardon and peace. John, 14 : 13. We often think it too much boldness to approach God. What! such sinners as we to come for pardon! we shall be denied. This is a sinful modesty. Did we come in our own name, it would indeed be presumption; but Christ intercedes for us in the

force and efficacy of his own blood; therefore, now to be afraid to come to God in prayer, would be a dishonor to Christ's intercession. Heb. 4: 14–16.

He also intercedes for our sanctification. His language in heaven is like his prayer while on earth; "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." John, 17: 17. This is the work and fruit of the Spirit, and therefore Christ promised to send him as soon as he should have ascended to the Father; and this unspeakable gift he bestows on all his children. Hence, saith the apostle, "ye have an unction from the Holy One." 1 John, 2: 20. By this unction they are made partakers of the divine nature. 2 Pet. 1: 4. What is said falsely of the philosopher's stone, that the metal it touches is changed into gold, is perfectly true of this unction. Every soul it touches is changed, and made partaker of the divine nature; becomes holy, and resembles God. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Cor. 5: 17.

Comfort and support under affliction are other purchased blessings he pleads for.

The Spirit was not promised as a sanctifier only, but also as a comforter. John, 14: 16. O how refreshing the consolations of the Spirit!—sweeter than honey that drops from the comb! It is the manna in the golden pot. A drop of this heavenly comfort is enough to sweeten a sea of worldly sorrow. It is called "the earnest of the Spirit." 2 Cor. 1: 22; an earnest to assure us of the whole sum. A taste of heavenly joy and peace is an assurance of the full fruition in glory. Christ further intercedes,

§ 8. That their accuser may be silenced, their enemies overcome, and they themselves kept from evil. Christ pleads for the saints, as queen Esther did for her people, the Jews, when Haman had determined on their destruction. "Let my people," said she, "be given me at my request." Esther, 7: 3. When Satan shows the blackness of their sins, Christ

shows the redness of his wounds. Many charges are brought against believers by their enemies, but Christ answers all their accusations. If true, he pleads his own merits, that they may obtain remission of sin; if false, he vindicates them. Zech. 3: 1, 5; Rom. 8: 33, 34. Christ intercedes for *every* sin. Under the law, there were some sins for which the high priest was neither allowed to offer sacrifice nor to intercede. Hence, said David, "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt-offerings." Ps. 51: 16. But Christ, by his intercession, procures the pardon of every sin. Hence, saith the apostle, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John, 1: 7.

§ 9. Christ also intercedes for his people, that they may be enabled to persevere unto the end. We can no more keep ourselves in the spiritual life, than we can in the natural. It is God that must keep us alive, both naturally and spiritually, although we must use the means in both, as if all were dependent on us, 1 Pet. 1: 5, "who are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation." Our perseverance is in answer to Christ's intercession. John, 17: 24. The prayer of Christ for Peter is a copy of his intercession in heaven for every individual in his flock; "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Luke, 22: 32. The saints persevere in believing, because Christ perseveres in interceding. Christ will never cease to intercede till all his chosen people are brought to glory. The immediate end of Christ's death was our reconciliation, and the immediate end of his intercession our glorification. John, 17: 24; Rom. 5: 10.

§ 10. Properties of Christ's intercession.

Christ pleads the cause of his people with infinite skill and wisdom. He knows every person's case, and all his wants. He knows what blessings they need, and how they are to be conveyed. He is perfectly acquainted with the laws and constitution of heaven, and is perfectly familiar with the best arguments to be used.

§ 11. He also pleads with great tenderness and compassion. Aaron had the names of the twelve tribes on the breastplate when he went into the most holy place to plead for the people. Exod. 28: 29. But Christ has the name of every individual of his people engraven upon his heart. Hence, saith the apostle, "In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself has suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." Heb. 2: 17, 18.

Christ pleads feelingly. Not like an ordinary lawyer or advocate, who is not influenced so much by feelings of sympathy and affection as by self-interest. But Christ pleads his own cause and interest. He has shed his own blood to purchase life and salvation for his people, and if they should not be saved, he would lose his purchase. As a tender-hearted mother would plead with the judge for her son ready to be condemned, so Christ intercedes with the strongest feelings of sympathy and compassion. Christ had compassion on Israel in their temporal bondage, and therefore delivered them. Isa. 63: 9. And his compassion was not lessened by his assumption of our nature. He became a man of sorrows, that he might be a man of compassion. By a reflection upon his own condition in the world, he is able to move our cause with such a tender feeling of it as if he had the smart of it present in his own heart and bowels. The greatest pity must reside in him, since he endured the greatest misery in our nature. Heb. 4: 15–17. With what affection and compassion did he intercede for his disciples whilst here on earth, and the glory of heaven has made no change in his judgment and affections. As the glory which he had with the Father, before the foundation of the world, did not prevent him from pitying our condition in dying in our stead, so the glory which he has received will not prevent him from being a compassionate intercessor.

§ 12. Christ is a righteous and faithful advocate. 1 John, 2: 1. His intercession is founded upon truth and justice. He is righteous in his person and in his cause. As he could not have been a priest or sacrifice if there had been any unrighteousness in his person or life, so there could be no efficacy in his intercession if there were unrighteousness in his cause. He is also true and faithful. He never betrays the cause of his clients, either by sloth or negligence. When Stephen the martyr needed aid, he saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God. Acts, 7: 55.

§ 13. Christ intercedes with power and authority. It differs from that of one friend for another. It is his office, to which he was appointed; he has a commission for it, and a command to discharge it. He is as much bound to intercede as he was to sacrifice; for the one belongs as much to his priestly office as the other does. Ps. 2: 8; 89: 26; Heb. 5: 5. Christ is "a priest upon his throne." He has a right to demand. As he taught as one having authority, so he intercedes as one having authority. His intercession in heaven is not properly a begging, but pursuing a right, by arguments drawn from justice and equality. In this sense he is called an advocate, which differs from an orator. An orator uses rhetoric, to persuade and entreat the judge to show mercy to another; but an advocate produces the law. Thus, when justice demands the life of the sinner, Christ opens the book of the law which he fulfilled. When divine justice, the holy law, Satan, or our own conscience accuses us, Christ shows the merits of his death, or the marks of his crucifixion on his human nature.

§ 14. Christ pleads with great zeal and fervency. The burning coals which the high priest carried into the most holy place, denoted the affection and fervor of the intercession of our great High Priest and Advocate. The names of the twelve tribes of Israel were not only to be on the shoulders of the high priest, but also on the breastplate. Christ has engaged his heart to approach unto God. Jer.

30: 21. His language is, "O Lord, how long!" Zech. 1: 12. When Christ prayed for himself, he said, "Father, if it be thy will;" but for his people he saith, "Father, I will;" more as a judge than an advocate. Christ was not more desirous to suffer, than he is to obtain the fruits of his sufferings. No man is more solicitous to increase the honors and grandeur of his family, than Christ is to secure the happiness of his people. Our prayers for ourselves, when presented with the greatest affection, cannot be so fervent as his pleas for our souls are at the right hand of his Father.

We further observe that,

§ 15. Christ's intercession is most prevalent and successful. This may be argued from his dignity and nearness to God, and the perfection of his work. If Jacob, as a prince, had power with God, how much more Christ, the Son of God. Christ never lost any cause he pleaded; he was never non-suited. If the prayer of the righteous avail much with God, how much more must that of God's own Son! When Moses prayed for Israel, God said, "Let me alone," as if his prayer had bound God's hand. By prayer, Elijah had power to open and shut heaven. God has commanded us to hear Jesus, because he is the Son of God, with whom the Father is well pleased, and for the same reason God will hear him too. If it were possible for God to forget the priestly office of Christ, yet he would not forget the relation in which he stands to him as his Son, "the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person." Besides, Christ's will in asking, is one and the same as the Father's in giving. Our sanctification is the will of the Father; and Christ prays, "Holy Father, sanctify them." Nor does Christ ask for any thing but what he has purchased—what the Father has actually put into his hands—"all power in heaven and on earth."

§ 16. Christ's intercession is constant and perpetual. As soon as Christ entered heaven, his intercession commenced in all its glory, and will continue for ever. Heb. 7: 17. 24.

Christ is never out of the way when the cause should be heard. He always sits at the right hand of the Father, who is the Judge of the world, and is never out of his presence. Acts, 7:55; Heb. 4:16. The people of God, whilst here below, need a constant advocate in heaven; not only because Satan, the accuser of the brethren, is constantly engaged, but because they give constant occasion for their heavenly Father to be offended with them: this brings guilt upon their conscience, disturbs their peace, darkens their evidences, and lays them open to fatherly chastisement. Under such circumstances our only consolation is, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." 1 John, 2:1. When the wrath of God began to break out upon Israel, Aaron presently steps in with his censer and offers incense; and so the plague was stayed. Num. 16:46. In like manner, when a child of God offends, and he is angry, Christ immediately steps in and intercedes; "Father, it is my child that has offended; though he has forgotten his duty, thou hast not lost thy compassion. O pity him, and let thine anger be turned away from him."

§ 17. In closing this part of the subject, I would observe, that Christ is the one only mediator and intercessor.

As he trod the wine-press alone, and none of the people were with him, so he alone intercedes in heaven. As he alone is the propitiation for our sins, so he alone intercedes with the Father. 1 Tim. 2:8. Guilt prevents us from pleading our own cause, nor can one intercede for another, for all have sinned and are condemned, and none can make atonement. As neither saints nor angels could make satisfaction for us, therefore they cannot intercede for us.

§ 18. With respect to the reason or designs of Christ's intercession, I would merely observe, that it is not to inform God the Father, for he knows all our wants; nor to make him willing to do us all the good we need, for the Father himself loveth us. Though there may be many reasons we are ignorant of, yet God never does or appoints any thing

without reasons perfectly known to himself, and perfectly consistent with his nature and government. Thus much we know, that it is exceedingly useful and instructive to us. I will point out a few of these instructions.

§ 19. The intercession of Christ teaches,

The majesty, holiness, and justice of God. Plato says that God has no immediate intercourse with men but by means of demons or angels. When Israel was round Sinai, a boundary was fixed, and Moses alone drew near, to show his awful majesty; but, by Christ's intercession we are taught that we are utterly unfit to draw near to God, to speak to him, but only through Christ as intercessor. The atonement of Christ was but a transient display of God's holiness and j stice; but the intercession of Christ is a lasting and consto nt manifestation of it.

§ 2). A most affecting view of the evil of sin is another impor ant lesson taught by the intercession of Christ. Hereby God declares that sin is so hateful that the sinner is not allowed to come near to him but by Christ. Our prayers are not received, or our persons accepted, till hallowed by him. The tears of a penitent will not prevail with God without an intercessor. When God was angry with Job's friends, he would not hear them, but Job must intercede for them. Job, 42 : 8.

§ 21. The intercession of Christ displays his dignity and love.

The same love which led him to bear our sins in his own body on the tree, leads him to intercede for us in heaven. O how constant the love of Christ! He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Heb. 13 : 8. The same love which led him to groan and sigh, to weep and pray, to bleed and die, while on earth, constrains him to intercede in heaven. When Christ ceased from suffering and dying, he did not cease loving; and he will never cease praying till his prayer is perfectly answered—"Father, I will that they also

whom thou hast given me be with me where I am." John, 17 : 24.

§ 22. The penitent sinner is greatly encouraged by the intercession of Christ to come to God.

God is seated on a throne of grace, and at his right hand is Christ our advocate. We cannot with much hope approach an offended and highly incensed friend. In such a case we naturally fly to the intercession of others. Christ is an all-powerful intercessor. However loud the cry of our sins is, the cry of his blood and intercession is still louder, and will prevail. Will not God hear his own dear Son? The spirit of *bondage*, under the Old Testament, was partly owing to the want of an intercessor; but now we may come with boldness to a throne of grace. Read carefully, my dear Benjamin, the following encouraging portions of the word of God. "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." John, 14 : 13, 14. "In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him." Eph. 3 : 12. Seeing, then, we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Heb. 4 : 14–16. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." Heb. 10 : 19, 20.

LETTER VIII.

THE MESSIAH'S KINGLY OFFICE.

My Dear Brother Benjamin,

You have doubtless observed that the Messiah was promised under a great variety of characters. We have already considered him as a Prophet like unto Moses, and as a Priest superior unto Aaron and all his sacrifices; a Priest after the order of Melchizedeck. We now propose to consider him as a King invested with universal authority and power. This was taught,

§ 1. Typically. Melchizedeck, that wonderful man, who was both king of peace and righteousness, was an eminent type of the Messiah. David and Solomon, the greatest and best kings our nation ever had, were but types of the Messiah, who was far superior to both. Many things which are primarily applied to them, have their complete and final accomplishment in him alone.

§ 2. The prophets also predicted and characterized Messiah as a King.

I will notice chiefly those predictions which our Rabbins applied to the Messiah, as mentioned in the first volume.

Memorable are the words of Balaam. "There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall arise out of Israel—out of Jacob shall come He that shall have dominion." Num. 24 : 17, 19. (See page 259.) Hence you know, dear Benjamin, that our Rabbins frequently spake of a star that should announce the birth of Messiah. Take the following: "The King Messiah shall be revealed in the land of Galilee; and

lo, a star in the east shall swallow up seven stars of the north, and a flame of red fire shall be in the firmament six days." Again, "when the Messiah shall be revealed there shall rise up in the east a certain star flaming with six sorts of colors." Once more it is affirmed, as a tradition, that the holy and blessed God has determined to build Jerusalem, and to make a certain star appear sparkling with seven blazing tails shining upon it in the midst of the firmament, and then shall the King Messiah be revealed to all the world. Zohar. Gen. f. 74 : 3. Exod. f. 3 : 34. Num. fol. 85, 86 : 1. Hence at the birth of Jesus an unusual star appeared, which led the Magi or wise men from the east to Jerusalem, inquiring "where is he that is born King of the Jews?" Matt. 2 : 2. An eastern writer relates the following speech as spoken by the wise men unto Herod :— "A certain person," said they, "of great note with us, in a book which he composed, warned us in it, mentioning these things : a child that shall descend from heaven will be born in Palestine, whom the greatest part of the world shall serve ; and the sign of his appearance shall be this : ye shall see a strange star, which shall direct you where he is : when ye shall see this, take gold, myrrh, and frankincense, and go and offer them to him and worship him, and then return, lest a greater calamity befall you. Now, the star has appeared unto us, and we are come to perform what was commanded us." Abulphrag, Hist. Dynast. p. 54. 70. Chaludius, a Platonic philosopher and not a Christian, says : "There is also a more venerable and sacred history, which speaks of the rising of a certain unusual star ; not foretelling diseases and death, but the descent of a venerable God, born for the sake of human conversation and the affairs of mortals ; which star truly, when the wise men of the Chaldeans saw in their journey by night, and being very expert in their considerations of celestial things, are said to inquire after the birth of the new Deity, and having found the infant majesty, to worship him and pay their vows, wor-

thy of such a God." Fabricie Bibliothee. Latin, p. 142–146. Now the knowledge of a star, predicted by Balaam, may have been obtained either from the translation of the Old Testament into Greek, called the Septuagint, or from Zerdusk or Zoroastes, the author of the sect of the Jewish Magi, who is said to have been a Jew by birth, and well acquainted with the Old Testament. Thus, my dear Benjamin, you perceive that Balaam prophesied of the Messiah to be a King. In the book of Psalms we have several predictions concerning Messiah's kingdom. In the second Psalm, the whole of which our Rabbins applied to the Messiah, (p. 57,) Jehovah himself declares, "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." Psa. 2: 6. The hill of Zion was the favored spot where the Lord God fixed the throne of David in spite of all his malignant enemies; and it prefigured the kingdom over which the Messiah was to reign, the more honorable place in heaven, where the throne of his majesty is erected, to the joy of his people and the confusion of all them that hate him.

To the same promised Messiah our Rabbins ascribe the seventy-second Psalm, (p. 157,) in which his kingly office was thus foretold: "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him, and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him." Psa. 72: 6–11. Under the same glorious character he was predicted in the 110th Psa. (p. 308,) "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy peo-

ple shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth." Psa. 110: 1–3.

The princely and evangelic Isaiah is often transported with the anticipation of this illustrious King. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order and to establish it with judgment and justice, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Isa. 9: 6, 7. See also Isa. 11 : 1–7. Both these predictions are applied by our Rabbins to the Messiah. (p. 122, 233.)

In like manner the prophet Jeremiah spoke of the Messiah as a King.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth." Jer. 23 : 5. This prediction is repeated in chap. 33 : 15, and applied by the Rabbins to the Messiah, (p. 126.)

Neither is the royal character of Messiah omitted by the Prophet Ezekiel. "I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them: I the Lord have spoken it." Ezek. 34 : 24. Again: "I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all. David my servant shall be king over them." Ezek. 37 : 22–24, (p. 236.)

The Messiah's kingdom was represented to Nebuchadnezzar in his dream, as a stone which was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon its feet that were of iron and clay and brake them to pieces—and the stone which smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. Dan. 2 : 34, 35. Daniel, in expounding this dream, having described the Babylonian, the Persian, the

Grecian, and Roman empires, subjoins, "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." Ver. 44. Again, the same prophet, in describing the vision he himself had, says, "I saw in the night vision, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Chap. 7 : 13, 14. (p. 264, 308.)

Micah the prophet, predicting the birth-place of Messiah, describes him as a king, saying, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little amongst the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Micah, 5 : 2. (p. 257.) Hence, when the wise men of the east inquired for the new-born King of the Jews, the high priest directed them to Bethlehem.

The prophet Zechariah, in prospect of Messiah's triumphant entrance into Jerusalem, exclaims, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, thy King cometh unto thee. He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass." Zech. 9 : 9. (p. 263.)

§ 3. The prophets further ascribe to the Messiah all the ensigns of royalty; a sceptre, a crown, a throne, and a sword; subjects over whom he was to rule, even all the creatures in heaven and on earth; yea, all the angels in heaven were to take the oath of allegiance to him. See, Psa.

2:9. 45. 103: 19. It is further evident that the Messiah was to be a king.

§ 4. From the expectation of the people, both heathen and our own people, you perceive, my dear Benjamin, that all the prophets conspired to describe him as a glorious King. No wonder, therefore, that at the birth of Jesus there was a general expectation amongst the Gentiles, as well as amongst our people, that a king should reign, as has been shown at large, (p.147.) Besides, you know, my dear Benjamin, that nothing is more common in the writings of our ancient and modern rabbins, than the word "*Melech Meshiach*," i. e. King Messiah. Whilst Jesus was on the earth, the people in general, and his disciples in particular, expected that he would set up a kingdom. Hence the Pharisees inquired when the kingdom of God was to come. Luke, 17 : 20. And when Jesus made his public entrance into Jerusalem, the people cried, "Hosanna, blessed is the King of Israel, that cometh in the name of the Lord." John, 12 : 13. After the resurrection of Jesus his disciples said, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Acts, 1 : 6.

§ 5. Jesus Christ is Messiah the King.

He is a King invested with all regal power and princely authority; "King of kings and Lord of lords; the Prince of the kings of the earth." This name he has written on his vesture and on his thigh. Rev. 19 : 16. The angel that announced his birth, declared him to be a King. "And the angel said unto her, fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God; and behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus; and he shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him, the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Luke, 1 : 30–33.

Jesus Christ asserted it. Even when he conversed among

men, in the humble form of a servant, he assumed the royal character. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Matt. 28 : 18. Again : "As thou hast given him power over all flesh." John, 17 : 2. Again he said to his disciples, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father has appointed unto me." Luke, 22 : 29. And when accused before Pilate of being guilty of high treason for having assumed the title of king, he confessed, and denied not that he was a king." John, 18 : 33–37. This passage will be considered more particularly hereafter. It is worthy of notice, my dear Benjamin, that even Pilate the heathen was overruled to give a kind of accidental testimony of this truth, and to publish it to different nations by the inscription upon the cross in three languages then most in use, viz. the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, "This is the King of the Jews," and all the remonstrances of the Jews could not prevail with him to alter it. Luke, 23 : 38. John, 19 : 19–22.

The apostles confirmed it. On the day of Pentecost, Peter boldly tells the very murderers of Christ, saying, "Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God has made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Acts, 2 : 36. And again Peter and all the apostles when forbidden to speak any more in the name of Jesus, "answered and said, we ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him has God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior." Acts, 5 : 29–31.

The apostle Paul frequently represents Christ as advanced "far above all principalities, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come ; and has put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church." Eph. 1 : 21–22. Phil. 2 : 9–11. The saints and angels in heaven celebrate the honors of King Jesus. Take the following as a specimen ; and O

my dear Benjamin, may we be prepared to join the new song in heaven. "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round the throne, and the beasts, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four-and-twenty elders fell down and worshiped him that liveth for ever and ever." Rev. 5:9–14.

§ 6. I proceed now to show that Jesus Christ was perfectly qualified to be a king.

His wisdom was infinite. A king should be wise as an angel of God, to know all things appertaining to civil government, as the woman of Tekoah said David was, even to know and to be able to penetrate into the designs of his enemies, to guard against them, to provide for the safety and welfare of his subjects; and such is David's Son and antitype, the Messiah; on whom rests the spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and of knowledge; and who has all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; and all that wisdom by which kings reign and princes decree judgment, is from him. Isa. 11:1, 2.

He was just and righteous. King David with his last words declared that "he that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." 2 Samuel, 23:3. This was

evidently the case with his Son and Lord, the Messiah. "Justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne, mercy and truth go continually before him." His sceptre is a sceptre of righteousness. "Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's." Matt. 22 : 21. Though he permits, limits, orders, and overrules many unholy persons and actions, yet he still works like himself, most holy and righteous. "The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works." Psa. 145 : 17. It is easier to separate light from a sunbeam, than holiness from the works of God. The best of men cannot escape sin in their most holy actions, but no sin cleaveth to God, whatever he has to do with it. He also possesses almighty power. "Though a child born, yet he is the "Mighty God." Isa. 9 : 6. Besides his essential, native power and dominion over all, which belong to him as God, there is a mediatory, dispensed authority, which is peculiar to him as Mediator, as the reward and fruit of his sufferings. Phil. 2 : 8. This authority extends over the whole creation. "Thou hast given him power over all flesh." John, 17 : 2. All creatures, rational and irrational, animate and inanimate, angels devils, men, winds, and seas must all obey him.

All power was promised to the Messiah : "I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance." Ps. 2 : 8. This was fulfilled. "All power is given me." Matt. 28 : 18. His resurrection had not attained its full end and perfection, had he not been exalted to a glorious government. It was for this end that he died, that he rose again, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living. Rom. 14 : 9. He died to purchase it, he rose to possess it, and lives for ever to manage it. He was exalted for the honor of God and the happiness of believers; as Joseph, the type, was advanced to manage affairs for the interest of the crown and the good of the people.

Love stronger than death is another qualification pecu-

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liar to Christ. He "loved the church, and gave himself for her." Eph. 5 : 2.

He is a King full of mercy and clemency : as he has a sceptre in his hand, so an olive branch of peace in his mouth. Though he be the Lion of the tribe of Judah in majesty, yet he is the Lamb of God in meekness. He sheds abroad his love into the heart of his subjects; he rules them with promises as well as precepts. This makes all his subjects volunteers, they are willing to pay their allegiance to him. Psa. 110 : 3.

How exactly did he answer the prophetic description with respect to humility and meekness. Zech. 9 : 9. Isa. 42 : 2, 3. None could ever say with such propriety as he could, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." Matt. 11 : 29.

The meek Moses could not bear the provocations of the people; Numb. 11 : 12; but Christ bears them all, "He carries the lambs in his bosom, and gently leads those that be with young." Isa. 40 : 11. He is one that can have compassion upon the ignorant, and them that are out of the way. "A bruised reed he shall not break, and the smoking flax he shall not quench." Isa. 42 : 2, 3.

Well might he be styled the "Prince of Peace." Isa. 9 : 6.

When his disciples asked for permission to call fire from heaven to consume his enemies, he rebuked them, saying, "The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Luke, 9 : 56.

Another qualification peculiar to Jesus, is that he lives for ever. "They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." Psa. 102 : 26, 27.

§ 7. We will now proceed to state the nature of Messiah's kingdom.

Messiah has a twofold kingdom—his essential, and his mediatorial kingdom. The former belongs to him by nature, as he is the eternal Son of God, equal with his Father in all things. The mediatorial kingdom is that kingdom which belongs to him as Mediator, and is the reward of his obedience and sufferings unto death. The former consists in his right to possession of, and power over all things in the universe; the latter consists of all those whom the Father has given unto him, and whom he has purchased with his blood, and whom he now lives to see brought to glory.

The mediatorial work of Christ consists of two parts; the one to be perfected while he was here on earth, and the other to be carried on by his life in heaven. The former consists in his state of humiliation, his incarnation, sufferings, death, and burial. The latter consists in his resurrection, ascension, and sitting at the right hand of God, till all his enemies are made his footstool. Whilst engaged in accomplishing the former, he laid aside the manifestation and exercise of his essential glory and power; but having finished it, he prayed his Father to restore to him that essential glory and power, to be manifested and exercised in the accomplishment of the second part of his mediatorial work, viz. to bring his people to the eternal possession and enjoyment of the heavenly felicity he had procured for them. Hence, at the close of his state of humiliation, the dear Redeemer said in his last prayer, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." John, 17: 4, 5. Hence saith the apostle, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Wherefore God hath also highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. 2: 5–11.

With respect to his essential kingdom, the apostle calls him "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath "seen or can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen." 1 Tim. 6: 15, 16.

With respect to his mediatorial kingdom the Father says "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." Psa. 2: 6. And king David, by the Spirit, speaks, in this wise, "The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Psa. 110: 1. Thus you will perceive, my dear Benjamin, that by the mediatorial kingdom, is meant an empire of grace, an administration of mercy over our guilty world. It is the dispensation intended for the salvation of fallen sinners of our race by the Gospel; and on this account the Gospel is often called the kingdom of heaven, because its happy consequences are not confined to the earth, but shall be realized in heaven in the highest perfection, and shall last through all eternity.

§ 8. Although what has been said might be sufficient to show the nature of Messiah's kingdom and of his subjects, yet as the erroneous conceptions of our nation on this subject were the cause of their rejection of Jesus as the promised Messiah, (as I have stated before, see p. 45.) and as our beloved nation are still under the same influence, permit me to detain you a little longer. It is very evident, that whilst the prophets foretold that Messiah's kingdom should exceed all other kingdoms in glory, extent, and duration, yet they also describe him as a king who, like David, was

to wade through an ocean of sufferings to the possession of his kingdom. And it is still more evident that his kingdom was to be spiritual and not temporal. Hence the Savior himself openly and positively declared, "My kingdom is not of this world."

My dear Benjamin, you will doubtless remember that I have already shown that the chief cause why our people rejected Jesus of Nazareth, was the meanness and poverty of his appearance, or not answering their expectations of a worldly kingdom. Neither is it to be wondered at that they should conceive such ideas, when the prophets ascribed to the Messiah all the ensigns, splendor and conquests of a king. But it is evident that the prophecies must be understood in a spiritual sense.

I have already noticed, in section 5, that when Christ was arraigned before Pontius Pilate, and charged with being guilty of high treason in making himself a king, "he witnessed a good confession," although it exposed him to death. But although he confessed himself to be a king, he described the nature of his kingdom to differ from the kingdoms of this world, and therefore it was not treason against Cæsar. As if Christ had said, I do not deny that I claim a kingdom, but it is of such a nature that it need give no alarm to the kings of the earth. Their kingdoms are of this world, but mine is spiritual and divine, and therefore cannot interfere with theirs. If my kingdom were of this world, like theirs, I would use the same methods as they do to obtain and secure it; my servants would fight for me, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now ye see I use no such means for my defence, or to raise me to my kingdom; and therefore ye may be assured my kingdom is not from hence, and can give the Roman emperor no reason for suspicion or uneasiness. Pilate asked again, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, "Thou sayest I am a king;" i. e. thou hast struck upon the truth. I am indeed a king in a certain sense, and nothing shall constrain me to renounce the title.

"To this end was I born, and for this came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth." This is that good confession which St. Paul says our Lord witnessed before Pontius Pilate. Neither the hopes of deliverance, nor the terrors of death, could cause him to retract or renounce his claim.

In my next letter I will endeavor to show in what respects Messiah's kingdom differs from the kingdoms of this world. In the meanwhile I bid you Farewell.

Letter IX.

THE NATURE OF MESSIAH'S KINGDOM.

Dear Benjamin,

Agreeably to promise, I will now show you in what respects the kingdom of Messiah differs from the kingdoms of this world.

§ 1. It differs with respect to the foundation on which it rests. Jesus Christ is a King; not by usurpation, but legally; by immediate tenure from heaven. God the Father has decreed him to be a King, and has sealed him to his royal office. Psa. 2:6, 7; John, 6:27. Christ has a right to his kingdom, both by his Father's gift and his own purchase; "He has purchased the church with his blood." Acts, 20:28; 1 Peter, 1:19. The kingdoms of this world are often founded in blood, and many lives lost on both sides in acquiring them: the kingdom of Christ, too, was founded in blood, but it was the blood of his own heart; life was lost in the conflict, but it was his own—his own life laid down to purchase life for his people. The kings of this

world often sacrifice the lives of their subjects, whilst they keep themselves out of danger, living in the pleasures and luxuries of a court; but Jesus engaged in the conflict with death and hell alone. How worthy, my dear Benjamin, is such a General to be Commander in Chief of the hosts of God, and to lead the armies of heaven and earth!

§ 2. Christ's kingdom was not of this world, as it regards his subjects. They are such as are "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God." John, 1 : 13. They are such, and such only, as have experienced the inward operations of the Spirit. The seat of this operation is in the faculties of the soul and the understanding, will, and affections, the free and unforced inclination and actings of the mind. These subjects publicly own and acknowledge his authority, make an open profession of faith in him, and submit to his laws and regulations. Hence they are said "to be delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son." Col. 1 : 13. Hence "the kingdom of God and his righteousness" are joined together. Matt. 6 : 33. It is that kingdom of God which consists, "not in word, but in power." 1 Cor. 4 : 20. "Not in meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Rom. 14 : 17. These operations of the Spirit produce real holiness and purity of heart and life, inward peace and serenity of conscience, in a joyful and cheerful discharge of our duty towards God and man. With respect to these subjects, Christ is called the King of saints. Rev. 15 : 3. Further, it is not of this world, with respect to

§ 2. The laws by which it is governed.

The laws of human governments are often defective and unrighteous, but the laws of Christ's kingdom are perfectly holy, just, and good. The sanction of human laws, both with respect to their rewards and punishments, can only affect our mortal bodies; but the sanctions of Christ's kingdom are eternal. Everlasting happiness is the reward, and everlasting misery the punishment which Jesus, the immor-

tal King, distributes amongst his immortal subjects. Human laws can extend to outward actions only, but the laws of Christ's kingdom search the heart and the principles and actions within. Not a secret thought, not a motion of the soul is exempted from them.

§ 4. The ministers and officers of Christ's kingdom differ from those of the kingdoms of this world. All the angels in heaven are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." Heb. 1: 14. Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, are the ambassadors and ministers of Christ. They are intrusted with the glorious ministry of reconciliation, to beseech men, in his stead, to be reconciled to God: to preach his word, to administer his ordinances, and to manage the affairs of his kingdom, is their arduous but noble work. They are not adorned, like the ministers of carthly courts, with trappings of gold and silver, but with the beauties of holiness, the ornament of a meek and a quiet, zealous and faithful spirit, and a life becoming the Gospel of Christ, who was himself poor, humble, meek and lowly.

§ 5. Christ's kingdom was not of this world, as it respects his soldiers.

All of his subjects are soldiers; their life is a constant warfare; they have ever to watch against temptations from without, and insurrections of sin from within; but they wrestle not with flesh and blood only. They are indeed poor and weak in themselves, yet they overcome through the blood of the Lamb, and he makes them conquerors, yea, more than conquerors. They are most successful when upon their knees. This is their most advantageous posture, which brings down strength from heaven in the hour of difficulty.

As their enemies are spiritual, so are their arms and ammunition. "Our weapons are not carnal," &c. Hence the apostle, like a general at the head of his army, addresses the Ephesian soldiers in the military style, "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole

armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and having your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: praying always with all prayer and supplication." Eph. 6: 10–18.

Another regiment of soldiers, which are not of this world, are the angels in heaven. They are volunteers under the Captain of salvation. Hence, said the Savior, "I could pray to my Father, and he would send me more than twelve legions of angels." Matt. 26: 53. Permit me, my dear Benjamin, to recommend to you the following all-glorious description of King Messiah and his soldiers. "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written that no man knew but he himself: and he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords." Rev. 19: 11–16.

§ 6. The kingdom of Christ is not of this world, as it respects the arms and weapons he uses.

He does not employ such artillery as the kings of the earth do, to reduce whole cities to ashes. His exploits are neither the forcing of entrenchments, nor the coloring of rivers with blood, nor the covering of whole countries with carcasses, nor the filling of the world with carnage, and terror, and death; but to disarm divine justice, to dissipate prejudice by demonstration, to calm the troubled conscience, and to conquer death and the grave. The weapons he uses are his cross, his word, his example, and his Spirit.

By his word and Spirit his subjects become effectually convinced of their sin in rebellion, and reduced to subjection to him. The word is the word of his power, by which he has subdued nations to himself. It was by this word that in the primitive time he overturned the empire of the devil, silenced the heathen oracles, and demolished the pagan idolatrous worship.

§ 7. Christ's kingdom is not of this world, with respect to ensigns and equipage.

King Jesus did not appear in worldly pomp and grandeur, attended with a splendid equipage, surrounded with armed guards, and attended by a brilliant and magnificent court; but he came in spiritual splendor, agreeable to the prediction of Zechariah, "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass." Chap, 9:9.

His throne is in heaven, not on earth. Psa. 110: 1. His sceptre is a spiritual one, the word of God which he wields for the good of his people; it is the rod of his strength, which he sends out of Zion, by which he makes his people willing in the day of his power. Psa. 110: 3.

§ 8. Christ's kingdom is not of this world with respect to his exploits and heroic actions. The founders of earthly kingdoms are famous for having braved the dangers of the seas and land, routed powerful enemies, and subjugated nations to their will. They have shed rivers of blood, laid cities in ruins, and countries in desolation. How different the

exploits of Jesus! How gracious, how beneficient in their kind! His conquests were deliverances, his victories salvation. He subdued in order to set free, and made captives to deliver them from slavery. He conquered the legions of hell, and rescued wretched creatures by his almighty command. He subdued the most inveterate diseases, and restored health and vigor with the word of his mouth. He vanquished stubborn souls with the power of his love, and made them his willing people. He triumphed over death, the king of terrors, by "dying for our offences, and rising again for our justification." Consider, my dear Benjamin, how glorious the exploits and how amiable the character of our blessed Jesus, King Messiah. How much more lovely the Savior of sinners, the deliverer of souls, than the enslavers and destroyers of mankind! Who has ever performed such truly heroic and brave actions as this Almighty Conqueror?

§ 9. His kingdom is different from the kingdoms of this world with respect to extent.

All kings and monarchs have certain bounds and limits by which their empire is terminated, but God has set Christ higher than the kings of the earth. He is the true Catholic King; his government is unlimited. "Also I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth." Psa. 89 : 27. "All power is given unto me both in heaven and on earth." Matt. 28 : 18. "There was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Dan. 7 : 14.

The kingdom of grace is boundless: not as to its power over individuals, but as to their place or dwelling on this habitable globe. "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Psa. 2 : 8. "This Gospel shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations

and then shall the end come." Matt. 24 : 14. "And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord; for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies: and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." Gen. 22 : 16—18. It has already been shown that the Gentiles as well as the Jews were to be blessed in the Messiah. (p. 172.)

Christ's kingdom differs with respect to design.

§ 10. The great design of his coming into the world was "to seek and save them that are lost;" to rescue enslaved souls from the tyranny of sin and Satan, and to recover them again into a state of liberty and loyalty. "To turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." Acts, 26 : 18.

The design of his reign. The end of the kingdoms of this world is frequently to wallow in sensuality, to display pomp or vain-glory, or to conquer the whole world. But even the best and most laudable designs of the kingdoms of this world are not to be compared with the ends of the reign of King Messiah. Suppose that the sincere design of a sovereign's reign was to make a state respectable, to make trade flourishing, to establish peace, to conquer in a just war, to procure a life of quiet and tranquillity for his subjects; could this make them really happy? Could this quiet a guilty conscience, make death, the king of terrors, a welcome messenger? How much nobler the design of the Messiah's kingdom. "Represent to yourselves," says the eloquent Mr. Saurin, "the divine Savior in the bosom of God, himself *the blessed God*. He cast his eyes down on this earth. He saw prejudices blinding the miserable sons

of Adam, passions tyrannizing over them, conscience condemning them, divine vengeance pursuing them, death seizing and devouring them, the gulphof hell yawning to swallow them up. Forth he came, to make prejudice yield to demonstration, darkness to light, passion to reason. He came to calm conscience, to disarm the vengeace of heaven, to swallow up death in victory, 1 Cor. 15 : 54, and to close the mouth of the infernal abyss. These are the designs of the King Messiah, designs too noble, too sublime for earthly kings. "My kingdom is not of the world."

§ 11. Further it is evident that Christ's kingdom was not of this world, for it is eternal.

Though enemies rage and roar, and leave no means untried to hinder the erection and establishment thereof; yet all their plots shall be unsuccessful, and all their deliberations shall come to naught. The kingdom of Christ is fixed upon a firm basis which cannot be subverted. The decree, the covenant, and the oath of the unchangeable Jehovah secure it.

The kingdoms of this world have their rise, their progress, perfection, declension and ruin; but the kingdom of Christ, although it began very small, yet has gradually increased, and never declined, and will increase until all the elect of God are brought to glory. Our Lord himself compares this kingdom to a mustard-seed—to leaven—and in Daniel's vision it is a stone cut out without hands, and shall outlive all other kingdoms. Jehovah himself has declared the perpetuity of this kingdom, Heb. 1 : 8; "but unto the Son he says, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." His throne is established for ever, and he is unalterably fixed upon it. It cannot be shaken or undermined. He cannot be displaced or dethroned by all the powers of earth and hell. For thus saith the Lord: "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, let us

break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. For I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." Psa. 2: 1–6.

Having, at considerable length, explained the nature of Messiah's kingdom, I will now notice his administration of the kingdom. No kingdom can be without government. And as Christ Jesus is "a God of order and not of confusion, it was prophesied that he should rule and govern. Mica, 5 : 2. Matt. 2 : 6. He rules and governs his kingdom by himself as the supreme Head and Monarch. This government extends both to his willing subjects, and to his determined enemies.

In my next letter I will be more particular.

Farewell.

Letter X.

ADMINISTRATION OF MESSIAH'S KINGDOM

My beloved Benjamin,

Let me invite your further attention to the things belonging to the kingdom of Christ. I am now to describe to you the administration of this kingdom.

I will commence with his administration amongst his willing subjects.

§ 1. They are made willing. Christ's subjects, by nature and practice, are his enemies. Though they are his, both

by donation and purchase, yet until their conversion they are in the hand of their enemies. As the land of Canaan was Abraham's by promise, yet his seed had to obtain it by conquest; so Christ also obtains his people by conquest. They possessed by nature, in common with others, a principle of opposition and enmity to Christ. They have sworn allegiance to the prince of darkness, and live in actual rebellion against Christ, and will never yield to him till they be overcome by his mighty power. In this respect there is no difference between the Jew and the Gentile. "We ourselves also," saith the apostle, who was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, "were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hated, and hating one another," Titus, 3:3; but by the word of his power and the operations of his Spirit he overcomes their enmity, makes them willingly submit to him, renounce obedience to the devil, the world, and their own base lusts, and causes them cheerfully to bow to his sceptre, to take upon them the yoke of obedience, and say, "O Lord our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us; but by thee only will we make mention of thy name," Isa. 26:13; and with Paul, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Acts, 9:6. To effect this great, wonderful, and glorious change, Christ acts very differently from the kings of the world, as has already been observed. They have their arms, their swords, their cannon, and other instruments of destruction, by which they acquire and extend their dominions; but Jesus Christ has appointed the preaching of the Gospel, which is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Rom. 1:16. Hence the Gospel is called the kingdom of God and of heaven. When Christ sent out his seventy disciples, he directed them to say, "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." Luke, 10:9; Matt. 21:43; Mark, 1:14; Col. 4:11. Thus you perceive, my dear Benjamin, that, agreeably to the prediction (Psa.

110: 1–3) that Messiah, after his ascension, should send forth the rod of his truth to make his people willing, so Christ Jesus, after his resurrection, commissioned his apostles to go and preach the Gospel in all the world, &c.; having been with them for forty days, and spoken of the things pertaining to his kingdom, he commanded them to wait at Jerusalem until they should receive the Holy Ghost; and O how great, wonderful, and glorious were the effects! Three thousand of Messiah's enemies, who, with wicked hands, had nailed him to the accursed tree, became now the willing subjects of King Jesus.

In the same manner Christ continues to extend his glorious kingdom. The preaching of the same Gospel, though feeble in itself, yet is the rod of his strength, which does wondrous things. No other word, no other system possesses any efficacy in comparison with this. Hereby the stoutest and most obdurate sinners are awakened and subdued; the rebellious are subdued to a state of cheerful obedience; the very dead are quickened and raised to newness of life.

I would, however, here observe, my dear Benjamin, that the mere outward means are not sufficient of themselves to make his people willing, till Christ is pleased to incline and enable them, by the operations of the Spirit, to submit to him. He must conquer them before they will obey. By the Spirit's internal work upon the heart every thing that hindered their compliance is removed, and they are drawn by his power, without which none can come unto him. John, 6: 44.

§ 2. He rules them by his laws; they are administered both externally and internally. He has given them laws, both with respect to God and man. These laws are written in the Bible, and are a transcript of his perfections, and derive all their authority and vigor from him alone; and none have power to add to or diminish from the laws of this great King. Isa. 32: 22. He has given them the law of *faith*, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ;" and the law of *sanctity*, "Be ye holy in all manner of conversation." To make

known these laws, and to see that they are regularly and impartially observed, and to exercise proper discipline, he has appointed proper officers. Matt. 18: 17, 18; 1 Cor. 12: 28. These laws he also administers to his people *internally*. Christ our King is Immanuel, God as well as man, and he makes his laws to reach the inner man as well as the outward ear. He sets up his kingdom where no other can reach. He rules the will and affections; his power binds the conscience, and he subdues men's lusts. Micah, 7: 19. He writes his law in their hearts, and powerfully inclines and overrules them, by his Spirit, unto obedience. Isa. 30: 21; Heb. 8: 10.

This law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, makes them free from the law of sin and death. Rom. 8: 2. Here is much strictness, but no bondage; for the law is not only written in Christ's statute-book, the Bible, but copied out by his Spirit upon the hearts of his subjects in correspondent principles; which makes obedience a pleasure, and self-denial easy. Christ's yoke is lined with love, so that it never galls the necks of his people. 1 John, 5: 3. His commandments are not grievous.

§ 3. He gives them necessary support and help under all their sufferings, troubles, and temptations. "In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." Isa. 63: 9. He can employ all creatures, all elements, for the good of his people. Hence "the earth helped the woman; and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth." Rev. 12: 16. And of the angels he says, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Heb. 1: 14.

There are many temptations Satan uses to draw Christ's subjects from their allegiance to himself. Believers, therefore, need to be preserved and supported under them, that

they may not prove their ruin. Thus Christ, their King, manages the affairs of his kingdom for their advantage, and they frequently realize the truth of the apostle's declaration, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." 1 Cor. 10: 13.

§ 4. Christ corrects his people for their sins.

Though afflictions, absolutely considered, are not to be desired, nevertheless, since they are sometimes needful, 1 Pet. 1: 6, and conducive to our spiritual advantage, they are included in the blessings of the covenant of grace. How much soever nature dreads them, yet Christ's subjects consider them as designed for their good, and therefore not only submit to them, but conclude that herein he deals well with them. Hence, when he visits their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes, they reckon that he deals with them as a merciful and gracious sovereign, and not as an enemy; since his design is to heal their backslidings and prevent a worse evil.

He withdraws peace and takes away joy from the spirits of his people. The hidings of his face are sore rebukes. However, all is for emendation, and not for destruction. And it is not the least privilege of Christ's subjects to have a seasonable and sanctified rod to reduce them from the ways of sin. Psa. 23: 3. "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Others are suffered to go on stubbornly in the way of their own hearts; Christ will not spend a rod upon them for their good, will not call them to account for any of their transgressions, but will reckon with them for all together in hell.

§ 5. He defends and preserves them from their enemies.

As he has a sceptre to rule them with, so also a shield to defend them. "Thou, O Lord, art a shield for me." Psa 3: 3. The kingdom of Christ always had, and

ever will have many enemies; such as the devil, the flesh, and the world; but he preserves his people, notwithstanding all their cunning and furious attempts. He preserves his kingdom as a spark in the ocean, as a flock of sheep amongst wolves. He shuts the mouths of lions, and restrains the fiery furnace; as the bush, though it burned, would not consume. "I the Lord keep it; I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." Isa. 27:3. Zech. 2:5. Yea, he defends and preserves every particular believer. It was the Messiah that appeared unto Moses in the flaming bush, and preserved it from being consumed. The bush signified our people in Egypt; the fire flaming in it, the exquisite sufferings they endured; the safety of the bush amidst the flames, the Lord's wonderful care and protection over that suffering people. This was a striking emblem of Messiah's conduct to his subjects, and is confirmed by promise; "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand." John, 10:28.

They are kept by the mighty power of God, through faith, unto salvation. 1 Pet. 1:5. Kept as in a garrison, according to the import of that word. None are better defended, none more safe, than the people of God. They are preserved in Christ Jesus. Jude, 1. It is not their own grace that secures them, but Christ's care and continual watchfulness. Our own graces, left to themselves, would quickly prove but weights sinking us to our own ruin, as one speaks. This is his covenant, Jer. 32:40; "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."

§ 6. Christ bestows many privileges upon his people, and rewards them for their services.

There is nothing lost in serving him. He always gives them inward peace and joy, and sometimes riches and honor, even in this life; and, in the world to come, "an eternal weight of glory," 2 Cor. 4:17, and a crown of life. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of

the life that now is, and of that which is to come." 1 Tim. 4: 8. Though all they do for Christ be duty, yet he has united their comfort with their duty; "This I had, because I kept thy precepts." Psa. 119: 56. He is a bountiful "rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Heb. 11: 6.

§ 7. He receives, at death, all and every one of his subjects unto glory.

He who guides them now by his counsel, will afterward receive them to glory. The kingdom of grace trains up children for the kingdom of glory; it is the kingdom of heaven begun here below; the difference betwixt them is not in kind, but only in degree. The King is the same, and the subjects the same; the subjects of the kingdom of grace, at death, inherit the kingdom of glory.

I proceed now to consider Christ's administration with respect to his enemies.

§ 8. He has them entirely under his control.

He possesses all power in heaven and on earth. Devils cannot stir without his permission; they could not enter the herd of swine till he gave them leave. Well might the apostle say, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Rom. 8: 31.

§ 9. He uses them for the good of his people. Rom. 8: 28. Herein much of his wisdom as well as of his kindness is manifested.

Nothing displays more remarkably the admirable counsel of heaven, than snaring the wicked in the work of their own hands. History abounds with examples of those who were ministers of Providence in accomplishing purposes directly contrary to those they had in view. Instance the cruelty of the sons of Jacob. Thus the wrath of Pharaoh against the Israelites, and his unjust attempts to detain them in bondage, proved the occasion of bringing them forth from the land of slavery. Thus the inhuman plot which Haman had formed for the ruin of Mordecai, and extirpating the whole of the Jewish nation, proved the way for Mordecai's high promotion. Job, 5: 12, 13.

Sometimes, indeed, we cannot see from the beginning of an afflictive providence the end thereof, or what advantage he designs thereby; but the words of Christ to Peter are applicable to all his subjects; "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." John, 13:7. Hereafter we shall see how every step which Christ has taken in the management of his government has had a subserviency to promote our spiritual advantage here, and our everlasting salvation hereafter.

§ 10. He frequently restrains their enemies. Though they are permitted to annoy his people, yet he sets bounds to their power, as he does to the raging waves of the sea, over which they cannot pass. Job, 1:10; Psa. 76:10.

"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days." Rev. 2:10. They would have cast them into their *graves*, but it should only be into prison; they would have stretched out their hands upon them *all*, but only some of them shall be exposed; and they would have kept them there *perpetually*, but it must be for ten days only. Similar are the words of Jehovah by the prophet Ezekiel; "Behold, the princes of Israel, every one were in thee to their power to shed blood." Ezek. 22:6; they went as far as they had power to go, but not as far as they had *inclination*. Again, four hundred and thirty years were determined upon our fathers in Egypt, and then, even in the *very* night, God brought them forth, for then the time of the promise was come. Acts, 7:17.

§ 11. Christ will ultimately destroy them, and completely triumph over them. As he has a golden sceptre to rule his people in love, so also he has an iron rod to break his enemies in wrath. Psa. 2; Rev. 17:12, 14. His enemies may set up their standard, but Christ would set up his trophies. Rev. 14:18, 19. They shall be his footstool. Psa. 110:1. As Joshua put his feet upon the necks of the conquered kings, so will Christ put his feet upon the necks of all his

enemies. The stone cut out of the mountain without hands, which smote the image, (Dan. 2 : 34,) was an emblem of Christ's monarchical power, conquering and triumphing over all his and his people's enemies.

At the final judgment day, when Christ shall gather in all his subjects in one glorious company, and transport them into their mansions of bliss which he has prepared for them, then their enemies will be utterly destroyed from the presence of God and the glory of his power. "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet." 1 Cor. 15 : 25. Then death and hell will be cast into the lake of fire. Rev. 20 : 14. This will be the most signal display of the conquests of King Jesus. After this Messiah will deliver up his kingdom to the Father.

Christ's essential glory is eternal, without beginning and without end; but his mediatory had a beginning after his death and resurrection, and shall have an end. When all the seed are brought in and perfected, all enemies subdued and conquered, Christ shall resign his commission and his people, for whose sake he was commissioned and deputed to the government, unto his Father. 1 Cor. 15 : 24. When he shall reign with his Father in the glory of the Deity, the Father lays aside his immediate government, that Christ may be all in all; at last Christ shall resign the government to the Father, that God may be all in all, and delight immediately in his people when they shall be fully perfected and free from sin. The power, in regard to these particular ends for which it was conferred on Christ, ceases when these ends cease; but what belongs of right to him as God, or what was given him by covenant as a reward for his obedience, will endure as long as the humanity remains united to the divinity.

§ 12. Now, my dear Benjamin, I fear I shall exhaust your patience, although the subject is most glorious. I shall only add a few words respecting the history of Messiah's kingdom. I am fully aware, that to do any justice to this

part of the subject would fill volumes. The learned and pious Jonathan Edwards, in his History of Redemption, has furnished us with a judicious abridgment of the Messiah's kingdom. But I shall, for the present, refer you to the shortest but most comprehensive description given of it by the Lord Jesus Christ himself. His words are these: "The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof. Another parable spake he unto them: The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." Matt. 13:31–33. At first the kingdom of Christ was invisible; exceedingly small and unpromising. From the fall of the first Adam until the exaltation of the second Adam, the real subjects of Messiah's kingdom, the possessors of divine grace, were but few, and mixed with the mere professors of a belief in the Messiah. Still there was a secret working like leaven, and a gradual increase, until the time appointed by the Father for the exaltation and coronation of Messiah was come. Now, to make his kingdom visible, the anointed King sent forth "the rod of his strength out of Zion," accompanied with the effusion of his Spirit, and immediately three thousand of his enemies became the willing subjects of his kingdom, and daily many were added thereunto. That Christ has had, ever since that memorable day, a willing people to serve him wherever the Gospel has been preached, none can deny; and that this kingdom shall, like the leaven, leaven the whole lump; and, like the stone that filled the whole earth, spread and extend till all nations shall be blessed in the Messiah, and all men shall call him blessed, is evident from the predictions with which we commenced this subject, and from many others contained in the sacred volume, and which we shall, God willing, have occasion to consider under the second advent of the Messiah.

§ 13. From what has been said, my dear Benjamin, on the kingly office of the Messiah, we see how glorious a person Jesus Christ is. He who in the days of his flesh was reviled, reproached, persecuted, crucified for our sakes, that same Jesus is now exalted and made a Prince and a Savior, having "a name given him above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. 2 : 10, 11. How great the honor to serve such a King! His servants are called vessels of honor, 2 Peter, 2 : 21; and a royal priesthood, 1 Peter, 2 : 9. It is a greater honor to serve Christ than to have kings serve us.

§ 14. It is also a great privilege to have such a King to go to when our enemies threaten to destroy us. Christ can give us power to resist and overcome our corruptions, the snares and temptations of this world, and the fiery darts of the wicked one.

§ 15. This subject encourages missionary efforts.

Is the Gospel to extend to all parts of the earth? then the Gospel must be sent as far. Hence Christ gave the commission. How daring and vain to oppose missionary efforts! To attempt to stop the angel's flying through the midst of heaven with the everlasting Gospel in his hand, is as vain and unsuccessful as to attempt to arrest the motion of the sun in the firmament.

§ 16. How important to submit to Christ's sceptre before it be too late! Psa. 2 : 12. "Lest he be angry." It is not good to stir a lion. Take heed lest ye stir up Christ the Lion of Judah against you. Submit to him willingly and cheerfully. All the devils in hell submit to Christ, but it is against their will, and they are his slaves, not his subjects. Submit to him as a King as well as a Savior, obey his commands. Every one belongs to some king. All will be ruled by Christ, whether enemies or friends. None of his

enemies can escape. In my next I shall call your attention to the most interesting and the most important subject in the Bible, namely, the Divinity of the Messiah.

Farewell.

All-hail, the pow'r of Jesus' name
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all.

Ye chosen seed of Isr'el's race,
A remnant weak and small!
Hail him, who saved you by his grace,
And crown him Lord of all.

Ye Gentile sinners, ne'er forget
The wormwood and the gall;
Go—spread your trophies at his feet,
And crown him Lord of all.

Let ev'ry kindred, ev'ry tribe,
On this terrestrial ball,
To him all majesty ascribe,
And crown him Lord of all.

O that, with yonder sacred throng,
We at his feet may fall;
We'll join the *everlasting* song,
And crown him Lord of all.

PART II.

THE DIVINITY OF THE MESSIAH.

Letter I.

A PLURALITY IN UNITY.

My Dear Benjamin,

§ 1. Having in my former letters shown that all the prophesies in the Old Testament, concerning Messiah's state of humiliation and exaltation, have been fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, (adored be his name,) from which it is evident that he is the Christ the promised Messiah ; I intend now, by the help of God, to prove that this Jesus Christ, is truly God. This you know, my dear brother, is a subject of the utmost importance. It was for this, and this only, that the high priest and council considered themselves warranted to condemn Jesus unto death as a blasphemer. They had frequently tried to convict him by bringing forward false witnesses, but could not succeed until the high priest adjured him upon oath, to tell whether he was "the Christ, the Son of God, or the Blessed." Jesus having answered in the affirmative, the high priest rent his garment, as a token of mourning, and said, "What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy." Matt. 26 : 62–65. This charge of blasphemy continues to be the stumbling-block of our people to the present day, and the reason why they consider every Christian to be an idolater. But I shall

hereafter show more fully the importance of this subject to Christians as well as to our people. To present the subject to your view in a clear and convincing manner, it will be necessary to divide it into several parts, and I hope you will peruse them with patience and fervent prayer to God for the aid of the *Ruach Hackodeth*, i. e. the Holy Spirit.

§ 2. Before I proceed to prove the doctrine proposed, viz. the Divinity of the Messiah, I wish you to understand that I consider him to be really and truly God by nature, and not God either in an inferior sense or by constitution. I am far from the opinion of those who say that Christ is a mere creature by nature, but, by the will of the Father, advanced to the dignity of a God; and, being so advanced, he is *Deus verus*, i. e. a true God. Wherein, my dear Benjamin, does this differ from the old heathenish practice of turning creatures into gods, acknowledging one superior and many inferior gods? If such a distinction be consistent with truth, then Baal, or Ashtaroth, or any of the gods of the nations, might be looked upon as inferior deities, and be served with the *subordinate* worship. Solomon might sacrifice to *Ashtaroth* and *Milcom*, or *Chemosh*, or *Moloch*, provided he did serve the *God* of *Israel* with *sovereign* worship, acknowledging him *supreme*. Why was it considered a crime in the Samaritans to fear the Lord and serve their own gods? 2 Kings, 17: 33–41. Blessed be God that our people have been kept, for a long time past, from idolatry, and, without exception, do consider such worship idolatry; and hence it follows that if Christ be no more than a nominal God, inferior to the Father, all worship of him, and reliance upon him, would be idolatry as much as the worship of angels or men, or of the gods of the heathen world.

How just is the sentiment of St. Augustine, addressed to Maximin, an Arian Bishop, who considered Christ as inferior to God; "Repeat it ever so often, that the Father is greater, the Son less, we shall answer you as often, that the

greater and the less make two; and it is not said, thy greater Lord God is one Lord, but the words are, 'the Lord thy God is one Lord.' Nor is it said, there is none equal to me; but the words are, 'there is none other besides me.' Either, therefore, acknowledge that the Father and the Son are one Lord God, or in plain terms deny that Christ is Lord God at all." Aug. L. 2. c. 23. p. 727.

It is equally against reason and Scripture to say that Christ was constituted God by the pleasure of the Father. How could the giver and disposer of all graces receive any thing as a matter of gift or favor? How could he be said to have obtained the privilege of being adored, who had long before been adored both by men and angels? He who is God from the beginning, who had glory with the Father before the world was, who is himself the Lord of glory and Creator and Preserver of all things, was infinitely too high, too great, and too divine to receive any accession to his dignity, or any real increase either of perfection or of glory. When the Scriptures speak of his exaltation, it refers to him as Mediator, as has been shown before.

§ 3. You will further keep in mind, dear Benjamin, that when I speak in the following pages of a plurality or trinity in unity, you must conceive of distinct persons in the one Jehovah; i. e. there is one only God or Jehovah, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and these three distinct persons are but one Jehovah. I shall show hereafter that distinct personal properties are applied to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. But these persons are not three characters or relations only, in the same substance, mind, or spirit; but something more, because the Scripture plainly makes a greater difference between them; nor, on the other hand, are they three distinct substances, minds, or spirits, because they would then be three gods.

I employ the word *person*, because language does not admit of a fitter term to express this great article of our faith. The word *person* has not always been in use, yet God

was always believed to be Father, Son, and Spirit, as will be shown hereafter. It was first adopted to impress more clearly on the minds of Christians the doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ, in order to strengthen them against the errors of those who said that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are only three different names of the same object; as if Christ, the eternal wisdom, would have used terms for the institution of baptism (Matt. 28: 19) which convey such different ideas to the mind, without designing us to make some sort of distinction, and without intending to show us that there really is some distinction, yet at the same time without exposing us to multiply the Godhead, and thus mislead us from that great truth which he always inculcated, viz. that there is but one God, and that it is impossible there can be more than one. The word of God is full of expressions drawn from natural objects familiar to us, and the Holy Spirit employs them for the purpose of giving us clearer conceptions of what God is in comparison with man. Hence these expressions, "God repents, he is angry, he has eyes," &c. &c. and similar figures, which are merely designed to exhibit to us spiritual and invisible things by means of objects which are familiar to our senses. In this sense, the word person ought to be understood in reference to the Deity.

§ 4. I beseech you, my dear Benjamin, to guard against the common objection that this sacred doctrine is "absurd and contradictory, and therefore cannot be true; or incomprehensible, and therefore ought not to be believed." With respect to the former, viz. that it is absurd and contradictory, that three should be one, and one three. This may either be true or false. If I were to assert that my five fingers are one finger, or one finger to be five fingers, that would be absurd, contradictory, and impossible. But if I were to say my five fingers are one hand, and my one hand five fingers, this is neither absurd, contradictory, nor false. In like manner, to say that Jehovah is three persons, and

three persons one Jehovah, is neither absurd, contradictory, nor impossible. I freely acknowledge that this, or any other similitude, is infinitely below the dignity of the subject; but as it has proved a blessing to my soul, I fervently pray that it may prove so to yours also.

I cannot deny myself the pleasure of transcribing the following lines from the learned Dr. Grotius, on Matt. 28 : 19.

"Why is one God set forth in persons three?
"In holy writ thus known is he.
"That *three* are *one* what reason can us teach?
"God is above all human reach.
"Can it by no similitude be shown?
"The *sun*, *light*, *heat*, are *three*, yet *one*."

Again he says—

"May we not some such thing in mankind see?
"*Life*, *reason*, *will*, in one are three.
"Are Father, Son, and Spirit equal? they
"With equal might one sceptre sway."

§ 5. As it regards the second objection, viz. that the doctrine is incomprehensible, and therefore ought not to be believed; I admit the fact, but deny the conclusion. We believe the real existence of many things whose nature and operation exceed our comprehension. "It is an old and true distinction," says Dean Swift, "that things may be above our reason without being contrary to it. Of this kind are the power, the nature, and the universal presence of God, with innumerable other points. How little do those who quarrel with mysteries, know of the commonest actions of nature. The growth of an animal, of a plant, or of the smallest seed, is a mystery among men. If an ignorant person were told that a loadstone would draw iron at a distance, he might say that it was a thing contrary to his reason, and he could not believe it before he saw it with his eyes. The matter whereby the soul and body are united, and how they are distinguished, is wholly unaccountable to us. We see but one part, and yet we know we consist of

two; and this is a mystery we cannot comprehend any more than that of the Trinity." Ser. p. 24. Since, then, almost every thing in nature is so mysterious and above our comprehension, why should it be thought strange that the doctrine of the blessed Trinity should be mysterious and incomprehensible? Dr. Priestly himself, the great opponent to this truth, has acknowledged "that we can know nothing about the essence or nature of God." Simpson's Deity of Christ, page 20. The great reasoner Mr. Fletcher says, "It is one of the loudest dictates of reason, that as we cannot grasp the universe with our hands, so we cannot comprehend the Maker of the universe with our thoughts."

§ 6. Our people, you know, my dear Benjamin, acknowledge that they are bound to believe certain truths respecting God, although they exceed their comprehension. For the third article of their creed runs thus: "I believe with a perfect faith, that the Creator, blessed be his name, is not corporeal, nor to be comprehended by an understanding capable of understanding what is corporeal, and that there is nothing like him in the universe." The doctrine of the resurrection is attended with intricacies and difficulties above the comprehension of human reason, and yet it is one of the fundamental articles of our people, as will be shown hereafter. I freely acknowledge, my dear brother, that the subject is mysterious and incomprehensible as it respects the mode of existence, but as the reality of it is revealed in the Bible, it becomes an article of our holy faith, as well as that of the creation of the world, although it infinitely exceeds our comprehension how a universe could spring into being out of nothing.

Dr. Isaac Barrow, one of the first Christians and scholars, says "that there is one Divine nature or essence common unto three persons incomprehensibly united by peculiar idioms and relations, all equally infinite in every divine perfection, each different from the other in order and manner of subsistence; that there is a mutual existence of one

in all, and all in one. These are notions which may well puzzle our reason in conceiving how they agree, but should not stagger our faith in asserting that they are true; upon which we should meditate, not with hope to comprehend, but with dispositions to admire, veiling our faces in the presence and prostrating our reason at the feet of wisdom far transcending us."

§ 7. No one ought to reject a doctrine which is plainly revealed in the Scriptures, under the pretence that it is incomprehensible. This is to wish to be wiser than God; for what he has revealed without explanation, he wills us to receive simply upon his word, without comprehending it. If there were any reasons for rejecting what is revealed because we do not understand it, we should, on this principle, renounce the doctrine of the creation of the world; for who can comprehend how something could be made out of nothing? Who can understand the union of soul and body? Yet who is there that can reason at all, but admits the existence of both? It is enough to know that God reveals any thing, how far soever it may be above our understanding, in order to admit of it as a truth.—we are bound to believe it, though it be incomprehensible by finite reason, yet there is something in it which is clear, viz. its discovery. Reason itself determines that there is more propriety in believing a revelation of God, although we cannot understand it, than in rejecting what is manifestly revealed, merely because it is incomprehensible. Reason embraces the truth without understanding the manner of it; it receives it, because it comprehends that it is a revelation. In this way we believe God; we trust his veracity, his infallibility, and his word, and rest solely on the authority of his testimony. Faith is not an empty sound. We do understand what we believe, when we understand that it is God who proposes the matter of our faith; and we understand that he proposes it, when the doctrine, how far soever it be above the reach of our weak conceptions, has no absurdity in it; nothing

unworthy of God; nothing contradictory, and nothing revolting against reason.

I shall, therefore, appeal to the law and the prophets, and proceed to show

That there is but one true and living God.

§ 8. God is one in essence without mixture or composition, and one exclusively without any other. The sun is one, but the same God could make many suns; God is so one in essence, that it is impossible there could be any other. This, however, does not exclude three distinct persons, as will be shown hereafter.

That God is one, is a fundamental truth in religion. It has the concurring suffrage of reason and revelation to support it. To say there is more than one God, is as great folly as to say there is no God. Ps. 14 : 1. The just and proper idea of Deity is, that he is self-existent, independent, prior to all other beings, and the cause of them. Now, the existence of two or more such beings is no less repugnant to sound reason than it is to the sacred oracles. It implies a contradiction; and what implies a contradiction, or is in itself absurd, is irrational no less than anti-scriptural. Hence the wiser heathens acknowledged a Supreme Being. The inscription on the Athenian altar, "To the unknown God," Acts, 17 : 28, carries in it an intimation that they had some faint notion of one supreme God superior to all other gods; but the Bible puts it beyond all reasonable controversy. The unity of God is taught in the Law, in the Prophets, and in the Book of Psalms, by Jesus Christ, and by his apostles, as is evident from the following passages: Exodus, 20 : 3, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Deut. 6 : 4, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." Deut. 32 : 39, "See now I, even I, am he, and there is no God with me." Isa. 43 : 10, 11, "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he; before me there was no God formed, neither shall there

be after me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Savior." Isa. 44 : 6, "Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God." Isa. 45 : 6, "That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me: I am the Lord, and there is none else." Ps. 86 : 9, 10, "All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name. For thou art great, and doest wondrous things; thou art God alone." Mark, 12 : 29, 32. "And Jesus answered him, the first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. And the scribes said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth; for there is one God, and there is none other but he." 1 Cor. 8 : 4–6, "We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many and lords many,) but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

Besides, dear Benjamin, you know that this truth is not denied by any of our people; for it is made the second article of their creed, which reads thus: "I believe with a perfect faith, that the Creator, blessed be his name, is only one in unity, to which there is no resemblance; and that he alone has been, is, and will be our God." Neither would I have dwelt so long on this part of the subject, were it not to convince my dear Benjamin that I believe but in one Jehovah, the true and living God, as I did before I embraced the Christian religion, although I now most sincerely believe

That there is a plurality of persons in the self-same Jehovah, to which I shall now call your attention.

§ 9. That there is a plurality in unity will appear from the language of Scripture.

The word *Elohim*, which we translate God, is plural,

and is used more than sixty times in the short history of the creation, and more than five hundred times more in the Pentateuch. Now, whilst I would freely acknowledge, that, if we had no other proofs in favor of a plurality, I should not lay much stress on this; yet I do not feel myself at liberty to pass it by unnoticed. Seeing that the Hebrew language is one of the most ancient, if not the original language of mankind, how came it to pass that the plural word should be the most common term used to signify the Deity? How came Moses, an inspired writer, to choose out this word, when another singular name (viz. *Ail* and *Eloah*, which he uses on other occasions) might have been employed to describe the creation of the world and the supreme God? Is it not extraordinary that he should use such a word, which at least was calculated to lead our brethren to a belief of a plurality, unless he himself knew and believed in a plurality in the unity of Jehovah?

§ 10. The word Elohim is frequently joined with a verb, participle, or adjective in the plural number, which leads to the same conclusion. For example, Gen. 1 : 26, "Let us make man in our image, and in our likeness." R. Juda, in his comment on *Sepher Yetzira*, says, "Who is it God did speak to in the creation? He spake to his word (Memra or Messiah.) If you would know of them who is the spirit of whom we read in Gen. 1 : 2, "that he moved on the face of the waters," *Moses Botril* will inform you that it is the Holy Spirit. If you would learn of them who it was that God spake to in Gen. 1 : 26, saying, "Let us make man," Moses Botril tells us that these words are directed to the wisdom of God. If you would know what spirit it is that is spoken of in Job, 28 : 12, again Moses Botril will tell it is the Holy Spirit. If you would know to whom that is to be referred which we read of in Isa. 40 : 14, R. A. Ben David will tell you to the three *Sephiroth*." It has been objected that God speaks here after the manner of kings, who, in their edicts, &c. use the plural number to express their do-

minion, honor, and majesty. To this it may be answered, that the reason of their speaking in the plural is because their edicts, &c. are the effect of consultation with their ministers or privy council, but Jehovah takes no counsel with any of his creatures. Besides, this courtly way of speaking was not known in the days of Moses: and to suppose that Moses alludes to a custom that would be in use in future, is as extravagant as the supposition of the German divine, who, in his comment on Gen. 2 : 7, says the expression, "he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," is not inelegantly by some observed that this is a metaphor drawn from glassmakers, who by their breath make their cups and glasses into their several forms. "That divine," says Bp. Kidder, "should have been sure that this art of blowing glasses had been as old as that expression of Moses, before he had commented on a metaphor which he fancies might be drawn from thence." Again, Gen. 3 : 22, "Man is become as one of us :"* and again, 11 : 7, "Let *us* go down :" further, 19 : 24, "Jehovah rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from Jehovah out of heaven." *Menassa Ben Israel* "confesses this place too hard for him, unless by Jehovah who is on earth, you understand the angel Gabriel, who, as God's ambassador, bears the name of God." You perceive, dear brother, that he acknowledges two distinct persons each called Jehovah ; but he is mistaken in saying that the one was the angel Gabriel, and received the name Jehovah because he was God's ambassador ; for I shall make it abundantly evident that this is an incommunicable name. Further, Gen. 20 : 13, "God caused me to wander." Original *Hithoo Othi Elohim*, the verb is plural as well as the noun Elohim. Again, 35 : 7, "God ap-

* Or rather, "Behold the man *Hayah was* as one of us;" i. e. he was made in our image, and after our likeness ; but he has sinned, and come short of his former glory ; he has defaced this image ; he is not like the man he was ; and now, lest he put forth his hand, &c. Abarbinel in Michlol Yophi. Pagninus. Schmidt. Montanus.

peared unto him." Heb. *Nigloo Ailav Haelohim*, i. e. the gods appeared unto him; the verb is plural as well as the noun. Again, Deut. 4 : 7, *Elohim Kerovim*, "God so nigh;" again, 5 : 26, *Elohim Chayim*, "Living God;" in both these places the participle is plural. Once more, Eccl. 12 : 1, *Sechor Borecha*, "Remember thy Creators," the noun is plural. *R. Bechai*, discoursing on the word Elohim, says, "According to the cabalistical way, this name (Elohim) is two words, viz. *El Hem*, i. e. they are God; but the explanation of the *yood* (which is wanting in the second word) must be fetched from Eccl. 12: 1, 'Remember thy Creators.' He that is prudent will understand it." In Lege, f. 4. c. 1.

§ 11. I need not tell you, dear Benjamin, that our Rabbins are greatly perplexed about the interpretation of these passages. R. Bechai, on the words, "Let us make," says "that when Moses wrote the law, he gave an account of the several works of creation day by day; but when he came to write the words, Gen. 1 : 26, God questioned him about it, why he, after that manner, gave occasion to the heretics to open their mouths?" B. Rab. fo. 9. c. 2. The same author tries to persuade us that God took counsel with some creatures; his words are these, "With whom did he advise?" R. Joshua, in the name of R. Levi, says, "With his works of heaven and earth, like a king that has two counsellors, and would do nothing without them." R. Samuel, the son of Nachman, says "that he advised with every day's work;" another Rabbi says, "with his ministering angels," ibid. fol. 10. c. 1. But this opinion is rejected with scorn by Abarbanel in Pent. fol. 19, c. 4; besides, man is said to be made in the image and likeness of him or them with whom God consulted; but that man was not made in the image or likeness of angels, &c. but in the likeness of God, is expressly declared by Moses, Gen. 1 : 27, and by our Rabbins; and the prophet declares that God never took counsel with any of his creatures. Isa. 40 : 13. R. Huna says, "If this kind

of language had not been written, it would not have been lawful to say, *Bara Elohim*, i. e. "the Elohim has created." Martini pugio fidei, p. 388.

§ 12. Hence our Rabbins acknowledge that there are secrets and mysteries contained in these expressions which must not be revealed to the common people. I will just bring to your recollection what our most renowned Rabbi, *Maimonides*, says on this subject: "All things which are mentioned in the history of the creation are not to be understood according to the letter, as the vulgar imagine; for otherwise our wise men would not have commanded the concealment of these things, nor would they have exercised such care in hiding and involving them in parables: nor would they have even so studiously prohibited the mention of such things in the presence of the ignorant rabble; for the literal senses of these things either beget wicked thoughts, imaginations, and opinions concerning the nature of God, or certainly subvert the foundations of the law, and introduce some heresy. Whoever has any skill in these subjects, ought to be on his guard that he do not divulge them; as we have many times given warning in our commentary on the Mischna. Hence, also, our Rabbins plainly say that it is for the glory of God to conceal these things that are written from the beginning of the book to this place, (i. e. Gen. 1 : 26.) But they have said this after what is written concerning the works of the sixth day. Hence the truth of what we have observed in evidence is evident. But because he who has acquired any perfection is bound to communicate it to others, it will unavoidably follow that those who have apprehended any of these secrets, whether by their own diligence or by the help of a master, will, at times, utter a few of them. But this must not be done openly and plainly, but under cover, and only by signs and symbols, such as are to be found, scattered and blended with other things, in the sayings of our more celebrated and excellent Rabbins. Therefore, I

also, as you may observe in these mysteries, only mention one word or expression as the hinge of the whole. But I leave the rest to others, to whom it is to be left." More Nevochim, Par. 2, c. 29, p. 273, 274. On these words it has justly been remarked, "What reason can the learned Jews have for speaking of secrets and mysteries; for commanding the concealment of these from the common people; the use of parables, of single words or phrases, blended with extraneous matter; and for giving frequent warnings to this purpose, if they really believe the interpretations which they give openly? When this intelligent writer says that the literal sense of the Scriptural language concerning creation introduces heresy, he undoubtedly refers to the support that it gives to the Christian doctrine, which they distinguish by this name; and especially to that of the Trinity." Having now, in as brief a manner as possible, proved that Scripture language leads us to the idea of a plurality in unity, I will, in my next letter, show that this plurality is restricted to a Trinity of persons in the unity of Jehovah.

Farewell,

Letter II.

PLURALITY RESTRICTED TO A TRINITY.

My dear Brother,

Agreeably to my promise, I will now endeavor to show that the plurality in Jehovah is restricted to a Trinity of persons.

§ 1. This appears from many passages of Scripture. The manner in which the high priest was to bless the

people is thus described: "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." Num. 6: 24–26. On this passage R. Bechai says: "The name Jehovah is repeated three times with respect to the three periods of time, the present, the past, and the future, which the Divine Being has power over; of him it may be said, that he is, and was, and is to come, or will for ever be." Pent. fo. 169. c. 2. Again it is said in the ancient and celebrated book Bachir, "that the repeating Jehovah three times in this place teaches us that these names of the blessed God are three powers, and every distinct power is like to each other, and has the same name with it; i. e. every one is, and is called Jehovah." Ibid. R. M. Markanti, Leg. f. 173, c. 1, and c. 3.

The same author adds, that in the words of the Psalmist where it is said, the Lord reigneth, that the words bear witness of the three, *Hawiyoth*, (i. e. existencies or subsistencies,) which are in the blessed Creator. And what is said that all is closed with Jehovah, the peculiar name of God, intimates that he is the fountain of all, and from him are the emanations of all." He adds, "that it is said in the book *Zohar*, that in those words, the Lord reigns, there is a great mystery." How striking the agreement in the manner in which the high priest blessed the people of Israel, and the form of baptism, and the apostolic benedictions. Believers are to be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Matt. 28: 19; and the apostle implores on the churches, grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost." 2 Cor. 13: 14. Rev. 1: 4.

§ 2. The next passage I shall notice is Deut. 6: 4. "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord." You know, dear Benjamin, that our people repeat this passage more than once every day, and consider it of such importance, that they believe that whoever repeats these words

with his dying breath, is sure to go to heaven. Now, whilst in this passage the unity of the Divine essence is taught, a plurality or trinity of persons is clearly intimated. For the words in the original are, *Jehowah Elohenoo Jehowah Echad*, and may be rendered Jehovah our God is one Jehovah. This perfectly agrees with the preceding quotation from *Sepher Bachir;* and another of our Rabbins says, "*Jehovah*, &c. Jehovah is the head or beginning of all things in splendor, antiquity, and holiness, and he is called the Father, the *Elohenoo*, i. e. our God is the profundity of rivers and springs which go forth and flow unto all things. And again, *Jehovah*, that is the tree, the cabalistical tree, one of the *sephiroth*, called *Binah* or *Tevoonah*, by which the world was made, and all is one, one is knit to the other, and there is not found any separation, but all are one." Markanti in Lege. fo. 194, c. 3.

§ 3. The next passage to be considered is Ps. 50 : 1. "The mighty God, even the Lord hath spoken," Heb. *El, Elohim, Jehowah*, here are three names of the Deity. Hence the author of Midresh Tehillim in Loco asks, "Why does he mention the name of the blessed God three times? It is to teach thee that the blessed God created his world by these three names, which answer to the three *Middoth*, (or properties, or as they are called elsewhere, the *Hawiyoth*, *Panim*, *Havpeninim*, i. e. Hypostases or persons. See Sepher Shaar Zedeck, and in Sepher Yetzira, in Jos. Voisin, in Pag. Fid. p. 406,) by which the world was created, and they are these—wisdom, knowledge, and understanding. Wisdom, as it is said, the Lord by wisdom has founded the earth; understanding, as it is said, by understanding he has established the heavens; knowledge, as it is said, by his knowledge the depths were broken up. And this is it that is said Exod. 20 : 5, I am the Lord thy God, a jealous God, (Heb. *Jehowah, Elohim, Ail,*) answering to the three by which the world was made. And thus the children of Gad and the children of Reuben say *Ail Elohim*

Jehowah, Ail Elohim Jehowah, he knows. Joshua, 22: 22. And why are these mentioned twice? because by them the world was made."

§ 4. I proceed to notice the remarkable language used by the seraphims and cherubims, and repeated daily by our people with apparent great solemnity, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory." Isa. 6: 3. Permit me, my dear Benjamin, to bring to your recollection what two of our famous Rabbins, of blessed memory, have said on this passage. R. Simeon, the son of R. Yarchi, says, "*Kadosh se Av. Kadosh se Bain. Kadosh se Ruach Hackodish*, i. e. "Holy that is the Father, Holy that is the Son, Holy that is the Holy Spirit." Jonathan Ben Uziel repeats the same in Chaldaic. Peter Galatin de Arcanis, Cath. Verit. lib. 2. c. 1; see also Goodwin, Moses and Aaron, L. 4. c. 8. Ant. Univ. History, vol. 3. p. 11. Another of our Rabbins says, "There are three degrees or excellencies in God, and every one is called *cavod*, i. e. glory, or *panim*, i. e. faces or persons; the first is called supreme glory, the second, middle glory, and the third is called latter glory; this is the mystery, &c." Bechai in Lege. fo. 124.

§ 5. The importance of the subject will, I hope, my dear Benjamin, be a sufficient apology for adding a few more testimonies from our most ancient Rabbins, to show the antiquity of this most holy and glorious doctrine. R. Menachen relates that it is the doctrine of the *Yezirah*, and of the *Zohar*, that the wisdom is called beginning, although she is but the second, *Sephirah* being unknown to all creatures. They also maintain that it is the *Shechinah*, or wisdom, which rules the world, according to Proverbs, 8. fo. 1. c. 3, and fo. 35, 1.

The author of Zohar on Leviticus, fo. 116, teaches three degrees in the Godhead. "Come," says he, "and see the mystery in the word Elohim; viz. there are three degrees, and every degree is distinct by himself; and notwithstanding

they are all one, and yied in one, and one is not separated from the other." Again, Exod. fol. 75, upon the words Deut. 6: 4, he observes, "Thou must know that those three, (viz. *Jehowah*, *Elohainoo*, *Jehowah*,) are one, *unum*; but it contains three modes; viz. the fire, the air, and the water; now these three are one, and the mystery of the voice and these are but one, *unum*; Jehowah, Elohim, Jehowah, are one, unum." The same author renders Deut. 6: 4. in this manner, "The Lord, or Jehovah, and our God, and Jehovah are one. He is the beginning of all things, the ancient of ancients, the garden of roots, and the perfection of all saints; and he is called the Father. The other *Elohainoo*, our God, is the depth and fountain of sciences, who proceeds from the Father, and is called the Son. The next, or Jehovah, he is the Holy Ghost, who proceeds from them both, and is called the measure of the voice. He is one, so that one concludes with the other, and unites them together. And therefore he says, hear, O Israel, i. e. join together the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and make him one essence and one substance. For whatsoever is the one, is in the other. He has been the whole, he is the whole, and he will be the whole."

On the same place he adds, "This is the mystery of him who was before the rocks, and is united with the head and stem and the way. By Jehovah (the first) is meant the high or first beginning; by Elohainoo, the stem, is meant the stem spoken of Isa. 11, the stem of Jesse, (the Messiah;) by Jehovah (last) is meant the way."

§ 6. R. Menachem, in Sepher Yezira, says, "In the cabalistic tree are ten sephiroth or members. The first is called the chief crown and the first glory, whose essence no creature can comprehend; the second is called wisdom, and the intelligence illuminating the crown of the creation, the brightness of equal unity, who is exalted above every head, and the second glory; and the third is called the sanctifying understanding, the worker and parent of faith. These

three first numbers are intellectual, and not like the other seven properties or attributes." On the same subject it is said, "between him who produces, and those who are produced, there is no difference. He and they are all one and the same essence, in which, in three points or modes, are formed the crown, wisdom, and understanding, and in these are comprehended all the rest of the Sephiroth or numerations."

The learned Philo says, "God attended with his two supreme powers, principality and goodness, being himself but one in the middle of these two, makes three appearances to the seeing soul." De. Sacrif. ab. et cain. p. 108, B. Again he says, "In the middle is the Father of all things; on each side of him are the two powers, the eldest and the nearest to Jehovah, whereof one is the creative power, the other is the royal power; the creative power is called God, the royal power is called Lord." De Abrahame, p. 287. E.

R. Hay Hagaon says, "There are three lights in God, the ancient light, or *Kadmon*, the pure light, or *Tzach*, the purified light, or *Metzuchtzach*; and that these three make but one God, and that there is neither plurality nor polytheism in this." The same idea is taught by R. Shem T'ov, in his book *Emunoth*, p. 4, c. 8, p. 32, c. 2.

The cabalists frequently distinguish the three persons by the three Hebrew personal pronouns; Ani (I) the first person, called *Ensoph*, or infinite, the Father; Athtah (thou) the second person, called *Chochmah*, or wisdom; Hoo (he) called *Binah*, understanding, or *Ruach Hackodesh*, the Holy Spirit, by whom the prophets were inspired.

§ 7. From the preceding statement I hope my dear Benjamin will be convinced that both the sacred Scriptures and our ancient Rabbins taught a trinity of persons in the unity of the Divine essence; and I should now proceed to point out the importance of this doctrine, but as I shall have occasion to speak of it hereafter, I will now say but a few words. Christians, as well as our people, believe that

the first and fundamental principle of religion is, that there is a God; secondly, that there is but one living and true God; and lastly, that religious worship and divine honors are to be paid to this one living and true God alone. Either, therefore, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are this one living and true God, or else we transgress these fundamental laws of nature and of God every time we pray and ascribe glory to either the Son or the Holy Ghost. The doctrine of the blessed Trinity, therefore, is by no means a speculative and insignificant thing as some would persuade us it is.

"The faith of the Holy Trinity," says the learned Dr. Sherlock, "is so fundamental to the Christian religion, that if Christianity be worth contending for, that is. For if God has not an eternal Son and an eternal Spirit, the whole mystery of our redemption by Christ, and of our sanctification by the Spirit, which, in its consequences, is the whole of the Gospel, and distinguishes it from all other religions, is utterly lost, and we are reduced again to a mere system of moral philosophy." Simpson's Deity of Christ, p. 14.

Farewell.

When shall I see him face to face;
When to my dear Redeemer fly;
When shall I meet his kind embrace,
And find his welcome rest on high!

Come, dearest Savior, quickly come;
Life without thee is life forlorn:
O take thy longing pilgrim home—
My soul for earth was never born!

Letter IIII.

DISTINGUISHING MARKS OF DEITY.

Dear Benjamin,

Having, in the preceding letter, shown that there is a plurality of persons in the divine essence, I will now proceed to show that Jesus, the promised Messiah, is truly God.

§ 1. This will appear, if we consider that there are certain criteria by which the Creator is distinguished from the creature. If the peculiar marks of the human nature were to be found in brute animals, this would bring everlasting confusion into the affairs of life. Much more necessary is it, therefore, that there should be the most evident marks of distinction between God and the creature, lest we should bring the same confusion into all our religion and worship, by mistaking the creature for God, and God for the creature.

§ 2. It is generally acknowledged that it was the great object of the religion given to our fathers, to preserve in the world the worship of the true God, notwithstanding the universal tendency to idolatry among all nations. One great source of idolatry, (i. e. giving the glory to the creature which belongs to the Creator,) especially to the most ignorant part of mankind, has been the mistaking the creature for the Creator. It must, therefore, be supposed that if God has ever employed mere creatures as instruments in delivering his will, he has used the most effectual means to prevent men from apprehending that the speaker was God. We can suppose no means so obvious, nor one that

would so directly tend to prevent this mistake, as that of prohibiting those whom he employed from personating their great employer, using any of his names as if they might occasionally be given to them, or expressing themselves in such terms as might lead the hearers to imagine that God himself was the immediate speaker. If, on the contrary, this necessary caution has been neglected; if God has permitted a creature to say to his fellow, I am Jehovah, I am that I am; so far was he from using those means that were most consistent with infinite wisdom for the prevention of idolatry, that we cannot conceive that he could have taken more direct or effectual methods for establishing it, although this had been his avowed design in the whole of that revelation contained in the Old Testament.

Now, it is very evident from the sacred Scripture, that Jehovah is very jealous that no creature shall share in his incommunicable characteristics. Thus says Jehovah, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me, for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God." Exod. 20 : 3–5. "Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God which he made with you, and make you a graven image, or the likeness of any thing which the Lord thy God hath forbidden thee; for the Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God." Deut. 4 : 23, 24. See also Deut. 6 : 13–15; 32 c. 16 : 21; Joshua, 24 : 19.

§ 3. It is agreed on all hands, that there can be no criteria more descriptive and distinctive of the true and living God than those of names, titles, attributes, works, and worship. The peculiar divine names are chiefly these two; viz. the name Jehovah, and the name God; with some additional word of honor, as the true God, the great God, the mighty God, the only wise God, God and none else, and God blessed for ever. The peculiar divine titles are, the God of Abraham, the Lord of hosts, King of kings, and Lord of lords, the First and the Last. The peculiar divine attributes are, omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, eter-

nity, and immutability. The peculiar divine works are, the creation and conservation of all things, the changing of the heart, and raising the dead. These are the distinguishing characters by which God was pleased to make himself known under the Old Testament, and it is upon these accounts that he, in opposition to other gods, claims to be received and honored as God. This is abundantly evident from the following passages of Scripture, which I would recommend to my dear Benjamin to read and meditate on. Gen. 21 : 33. Deut. 3 : 24. 4 : 7. 7 : 19. 10 : 17. 32 : 39. 33 : 32. 2 Kings, 19 : 15. 1 Chro. 29 : 11. Job, 9 : 4. 12 : 16, 26. 37 : 16. 42 : 2. Psa. 8 : 4. 93 : 2. 13 : 7. Isa. 26 : 4. 42 : 5. 45 : 7, 18. 57 : 15. Jer. 10 : 12. 22 : 23, 24. Dan. 2 : 20. Mal. 3 : 6.

§ 4. It may, however, not be improper, my dear Benjamin, to show more particularly that these criteria are incommunicable. With respect to the names and titles, I shall notice at present only the name Jehovah.

This is the grand, the peculiar and incommunicable name of God. It is not applied to any created being throughout the sacred Scriptures. This is evident,

1. From its peculiar structure and signification. It is composed of the three essential parts of the Hebrew verb to be, viz. the preter tense *Hayah*, he was; present participle *Howe*, he is; and the future tense *Yihye*, he shall be. Hence it imports the necessary, independent, unchangeable, and eternal existence of the Most High, whose name is "I am that I am." Exod. 3 : 14. If this name, therefore, be applied to any living being, it constitutes an irrefragable proof of his divinity from an infallible evidence.

It is much to be regretted that this sublime and awful name has not been retained in the sacred volume. There is nothing in the word Lord expressive of the grand and comprehensive ideas included in the word Jehovah. Besides, there are gods many and lords many, but to us there is but one Jehovah. True, the translators have

distinguished it from the common word Lord, which signifies mere dominion or authority, by putting it in large or capital letters; but the generality of readers neither know the reason nor are apt to take notice of the distinction.

2. It is further evident from the express declaration of Jehovah himself. The attentive reader of the Scriptures must have observed how the one true God insists upon his being Jehovah in opposition to all other gods, glorying in a manner and triumphing in it, as the distinguishing character by which he will be known to be infinitely superior to all the gods of the nations. How expressive the language, "I am that I am!" Exod. 3 : 14. By the prophet Isaiah he speaks thus: "I am Jehovah, that is my name, and my glory I will not give to another." Isa. 42 : 8. Again, "I am Jehovah, and there is no God beside me." Isa. 45 : 5. How striking the words of the Psalmist: "That men may know that thou whose name alone is Jehovah, art the most high over all the earth." Psa. 83 : 18. See also 135 : 13. Deut. 28 : 58. Hosea, 12 : 5. Mal. 3 : 6. From these, and many other passages, it is evident that the Lord made himself known to his people by the name Jehovah, to express his peculiar nature, and to distinguish himself from all those whom he called gods, or who were so called by others; and when therefore this name was in composition imposed on a place, as *Jehovah Shamah*, *Jehovah Nisi*, or *Jehovah Shalem*, there could be no danger of its being mistaken by them for God, or of being supposed to be possessed of a divine nature: but as the idolatry of the world in general consisted in deifying intelligent creatures, had he permitted this name to be given to any such, he would have defeated his own design in the use of it, and would himself have signally contributed to idolatry.

§ 5. The only place in the whole Bible, urged as an objection, is Jer. 33 : 16, where Jerusalem, or the church, is said to be called Jehovah; but a little attention will show that it is not Jerusalem, or the church, but the Messiah,

which is called in that place Jehovah our Righteousness. You will observe that the prediction delivered by the prophet in this chapter, v. 15, 16, is literally the same as that in chap. 23 : 5, 6, with no other difference except the last clause of the 16th verse, now under consideration. In chap. 23 it reads thus, "And this is his name whereby he shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness;" and in chap. 33 it is translated, "And this *is the name* wherewith she shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness." Now you will please to take notice,

1st. That in chap. 33 : 16, the words "is the name" are in italics, to show that they are not in the original text.

2d. That if it were the church that is called Jehovah, the word *lah*, translated she, ought to be the accusative, *othah*, *her*, and not the dative, *lah*, *to her*.

3dly. That several manuscript copies have the clause in chap. 33 the same as in chap. 23.

4th. That the Targum also translates both passages alike. viz. "This is the name wherewith they shall call him, the Lord our Righteousness."

5th. That the words in the original in chap. 33 : 16, are these, *weseh Asher yikra lah*, literally, "and this that shall call to her."

Now, you know, dear Benjamin, that the word *Kara*, to call, means frequently to produce, effect, accomplish. Thus Jehovah says, "I will call for the corn, and will increase it." Ezek. 36 : 29; the Hebrew word is *Wekarathi*, I will call, i. e. I will effect it, I will cause the earth to bring forth plentifully. Again, "Shall I call a nurse?" Exod. 2 : 7; i. e. shall I go and bring one? In the same sense the apostle Paul uses the word to call, when he says, "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called;" i. e. wrought a change in them, and brought them out of darkness into his marvelous light. Rom. 8 : 30. Again he says, "God, who quickens the dead, and calls those things which be not, as though they were;" i. e. he causes, by a powerful word,

those things to exist which had no being before. He said, let there be light, and there was light. You will then easily perceive, my dear Benjamin, that the plain meaning of the passage is, "this is he who shall call to her," i. e. that shall accomplish it for her. Substitute the word effect or accomplish in the place of call, and it contains an answer to the supposed question, Who shall cause Jerusalem to dwell in safety? Answer, Jehovah our Righteousness shall accomplish it for her. I am pleased to find, after much research, that this sense of the passage is sanctioned by R. Joseph Kimchi, who reads it thus: "And he who calls her is Jehovah, our righteousness." Pagninus, Montanus Vatabulus, translate it in the same manner.

In referring to the Jewish Expositor of 1819, page 20, I find the following criticism, which will remove all difficulties. "I shall confine my critical remarks," says he, "to the latter part of the 16th verse; and this is the name whereby she shall be called, the Lord our Righteousness. In these few words there appears to be no less than three errors, which the collated readings enable us to correct. First, the omission of the word *Shemo*, *Name*, which our translators have very properly inserted in italics, as necessary to complete the verse. This word is preserved in three manuscripts collated by Kennecott, and was the original reading of two collated by De Rossi. It is also confirmed by the Chald. Vulg. Syr. Ar. (Waltoni Bib. Poly.)

"Secondly, for *yickra*, i. e. *he* shall call, two of De Rossi's manuscripts read *yikreoo*, i. e. *they* shall call, and it was the original reading of another manuscript (Doederlein.) This reading is confirmed by the Chaldaic Vulg. Ar. (Walt. Bib. Poly.) as well as by the parallel passage, Jer. 23. 6, and by the Chald. Vulg. Syr. and Arab. versions of that passage

"The third error is the substitution of *Lah*, *her*, for *Lo*, *him*. But *Lo* is happily preserved in one of Kennicott's manuscripts, and in another *Hay* is an erasure. *Lo* is also

in the margin of one of De Rossi's, (Doederlein,) and in the reading of Vulg. Arab. and perhaps Syr. Thus the two passages (Jer. 23 . 6, and 33 : 16) read exactly alike, viz. 'And this is his name which they shall call him, Jehovah our Righteousness.' "

§ 7. It is needless, however, to multiply testimonies on a subject on which our people are unanimous. I therefore proceed to the incommunicable attributes.

But before we consider these attributes singly, I would beg your attention, my dear Benjamin, to one general remark, viz. that he must be God, to whom God's essential attributes and perfections belong; for such attributes cannot be separated from the essence of God, or belong to any inferior being: for example, to be absolutely eternal, omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent, uncreated, are attributes of God, which belong to his nature and being, and cannot belong to any creature; for how, then, could the distinction and difference between God and the creature be preserved?

For the same being to be created and uncreated, to have a being and to have no being, to be in all places, and yet limited to a certain place, carries in it an inconsistency and contradiction; the affirming of the one is the denial of the contrary. These opposite attributes cannot then belong to one and the same nature; for that must suppose it to be and not to be at the same time, and to be what it really is not.

To be a creature, is to be made in time; and therefore cannot be affirmed of that being which is not made, and never had a beginning: to be a creature, is to be limited in power, place and knowledge; for a finite nature cannot receive infinite perfections. That being, therefore, which is unlimited in power, place, and knowledge, cannot be a creature, and consequently must be God, to whom it is peculiar to be without beginning, to be infinite in power and knowledge, and to be immense, filling heaven and earth, but not to be limited or circumscribed by them.

A created and uncreated nature may be united in the same person, as in Christ; but to be infinite and finite, eternal and temporary; to know all things, and to know only some things; to be every where, and yet confined to one certain place, cannot belong to the same nature; for then that nature would be a contradiction to itself.

If God's essential properties could be communicated to a creature, then the essence of God must be communicated to the creature; for the essence and essential properties cannot be separated; for then God must be separated from himself, and both be and not be at the same time. And further, if God's essence could be communicated to a creature, then the creature would that moment become God; but God cannot become a creature, nor can a creature become God; therefore God's essential attributes cannot be communicated to a creature.

Such perfections as require an infinite, independent, unchangeable being for their subject, are what may be called God's essential attributes; that is, they are such as belong to God, and can belong to no other being; such are immensity, omnipotency, omniscience, eternity, and immutability. A creature may bear some resemblance to God, in a lower degree, as to wisdom, goodness, holiness; yet even these, in creatures, are limited, both as to measure and duration; whereas in God they are eternal and infinite, as his essence is; but no creature can be every where present, be without beginning and without end, know all things, and be able to do all things. To return then to our subject.

Omniscience, or the knowledge of all things, and particularly of the heart of man and his secret thoughts, is a property which Jehovah claims as peculiarly his. "For thou, even thou, only knowest the hearts of all the children of men." 1 Kings, 8: 39. "Let them bring them forth and show us what shall happen, let them show the former things what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things to come, show

the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods. Isa. 41: 22, 23. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I, the Lord, search the heart; I try the reins, even to give to every man according to his ways." Jer. 17: 9, 10. See also Amos, 4: 13.

Omnipresence is a distinguishing perfection of God, which implies his immediate presence in all places, taking cognizance of, and managing all the affairs of his universal kingdom. Ps. 139: 1–13. This is the common consolation which God gives to his people, wheresoever they are. "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Isa. 41: 10.

Omnipotence, or almighty power, is another divine incommunicable attribute. I need not quote any passages of Scripture on the subject, for it has been justly observed that almighty is so peculiar a character of Deity, that God takes it for his very title in more than fifty places in the Old Testament.

Eternity, i. e. without beginning or end, is another peculiar distinguishing perfection of God. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or even thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God." Ps. 18: 2. "Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts—I am the first and I am the last, and beside me there is no God." Isa. 44: 6.

Immutability, or unchangeableness, is the last incommunicable attribute I shall name. "For I, the Lord, I change not." Mal. 3: 6.

§ 8. I proceed to the next incommunicable criterion of Jehovah, which is the work of creation. The Scriptures every where appropriate this work to God, and exclude all other beings from the glory of it. By this, Jehovah distin-

guishes himself from all other pretended deities: he challenges this as his peculiar glory, that he is the Maker of the heavens, and all things contained in them. "Thus shall ye say unto them, the gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens: he has made the earth by his power, he has established the world by his wisdom, and has stretched out the heavens by his discretion." Jer. 10: 11, 12. "And Hezekiah prayed before the Lord, and said, O Lord God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth." 2 Kings, 19: 15; see also Nehemiah, 9: 6; Job, 9: 8. Jehovah himself declares, "I have made the earth and created man upon it; I, even my hands have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded." And again, "Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb; I am the Lord that maketh all things, that stretched forth the heavens alone, that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself." Isa. 44: 24; 45: 12. How unaccountable and unwarrantable are these expressions, if the great God had used another, even a created being, as his minister or instrument in the great work of creation; for none is said to do that alone and by himself, which he uses the assistance and ministry of another in the performance of.

The apostle, in writing to the Hebrews, lays this down as an undisputable maxim, that creation is the work of God; "for every house," says he, "is builded by some man, but he that built all things is God." Heb. 3: 4. In the same manner he reasons in Rom. 1: 20, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse." Now, if a creature might make all these things, that had no such eternal power and Godhead at all, the force of the apostle's argument would be lost. Creation

requires almighty power. Almighty power is an incommunicable attribute of God, whoever has created a world must therefore be God; but the creation is attributed to the Messiah, as will be shown hereafter; the Messiah, therefore, must be God. But supposing, not granting, that some glorious uncreated spirit might be some way employed in the works of God, I demand whether this sublime being has infinite, or only a finite power, communicated to it for this end; if an infinite power, this is to deify a creature; if only a finite power, that can never go beyond itself, act where it is not, or produce something out of nothing. In perfect conformity with what has been said on this subject, is the first article of our national creed, which ascribes the creation of all things to God alone.

You perceive then, my dear Benjamin, that it is the favorite topic which God is pleased to insist most upon, whenever he would either distinguish his own peculiar majesty and power above and beyond all the gods of the nations, or when he would excite in his people the highest idea possible suitable to his transcendent excellency and peerless perfections. Nothing higher or greater could be said than this, that he had created the universe, had laid the foundations of the earth, and that the heavens were the works of his hands. Ps. 102: 25, 26. If, therefore, it can be made evident that the Angel Jehovah is set forth to us under this same high character, let any man of common abilities, that has not his faculties prejudiced, or is not steeled against conviction, be left to draw the conclusion.

§ 9. I proceed now to show that divine worship is another of the peculiar criteria of Deity.

Worship, in general, imports the respect we pay to another on account of his excellency and superiority. Divine worship must, therefore, import such respect as belongs to a Being of such infinite excellencies and supreme authority as the blessed God alone is possessed of. Such worship is either internal, consisting in those acts of our mind (such

as esteem, reverence, love, trust, subjection, self-dedication) whereby we acknowledge such infinite excellencies and supreme authority to belong to the being we adore; or external worship, which is partly expressed by our words and our prayers, praises, &c. and partly by gestures, as merely standing, bowing, &c.

Now that such worship is due to God alone, is evident,

§ 10. From reason: for to worship God supposes him to be present with us, to understand the homage we pay to him; nay, to know not only our particular case and circumstances, but even our very heart, and with what inward intentions and affections we offer such honor and respect to him. It supposes that he can both hear and help us, and that he can judge of the sincerity of our devotions. Now, such an unlimited knowledge of human affairs, and dominion over them, especially such a knowledge of the heart of man, and such a presence with all worshipers, wherever they are, are perfections which belong to no mere creatures, but to the blessed God alone.

§ 11. From sacred Scripture: religious worship is so peculiar a prerogative of God, that he will by no means suffer any meaner being to share in it. He assumes the character to himself with a divine jealousy, lest any thing beneath God should partake of it. "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name. Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you; for the Lord thy God is a jealous God among you." Deut. 6: 13–15. This charge is repeated in chap. 10: 20, and doubtless the first commandment includes the same truth: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," i. e. no other objects of worship; and this is again repeated, Exod. 34: 14. Indeed there is scarce any command more frequently renewed, or guarded with more awful sanctions and more terrible examples of the wrath of God against the breakers of it, than the worship of the one true God.

§ 12. This truth is further proved by the fifth fundamental article of our people's creed, which reads thus: "I believe with a perfect faith, that the Creator, blessed be his name, is the only object of adoration, and that no other being whatever ought to be worshiped."

And now, my dear Benjamin, having shown at considerable length that there are certain names, titles, attributes, works, and worship which are the distinguishing characteristics of the true God, and incommunicable to any creature; it follows, therefore, that if it appear that such names, titles, &c. are given to any creature in the holy Scriptures, the argument from such names, titles, &c. will hold good to prove his being the supreme God. And if an angel is revealed to whom these titles, attributes, &c. belong, we must necessarily conclude that he is a divine person, and yet distinct from him whose angel he is said to be. I shall therefore endeavor to show, in my next letter,

That the angel Jehovah who appeared to our fathers under the Old Testament, possessed all these divine criteria, and therefore was a divine person. Farewell.

To thee alone ourselves we owe;
Let heaven and earth due homage pay;
All other gods we disavow,
Deny their claims, renounce their sway.

Spread thy great name through heathen lands;
Their idol deities dethrone;
Reduce the world to thy commands;
And reign, as thou art, God alone.

Letter IV.

THE ANGEL JEHOVAH.

Dear Benjamin,

Permit me to invite your attention to the various appearances of the angel Jehovah to our fathers, under the Old Testament, who appears to possess all the Divine criteria, and therefore was a Divine person.

§ 1. I am persuaded that my dear Benjamin, being so well acquainted with the Hebrew language, will require no apology for my calling the *Malach Yehwaoh*, the angel Jehovah, without the preposition of between; and it would have tended much to elucidate the doctrine of the blessed Trinity, had our translators done the same. Pardon this digression.

To present this subject in a clear, and I hope convincing light, I would beg the attention of my dear Benjamin to the following propositions, which I shall illustrate and confirm, both by sacred Scripture, and by testimonies from our ancient and modern Rabbins.

But as I shall refer also to the writings of Philo, it will be proper to say a few words respecting him.

§ 2. "Philo was an ancient Greek writer, of a noble family among the Jews, and flourished at Alexandria during the reign of Caligula. He was at Rome A. D. 42. There are certainly in his works many excellent things. Though he is continually allegorizing the Scriptures, he abounds with fine sentiments and lessons of morality; and his morals are rather the morals of a Christian than of a Jew. History, together with his own writings, give us every reason to believe that he was a man of great prudence, constancy and virtue." Ency. Brit.

In all his writings there is no allusion either to the New Testament, or to Christ, or any of his apostles. The design of his writing was to make our people understand their law according to the *Medrashim*, i. e. explanations, in an allegorical way, and to teach the heathens that their prejudices against the law of Moses were unjust, and that they ought to acknowledge the divine unity of the law. His writings are acknowledged by our Rabbins to be his as a Jew, and are frequently quoted as such for authority, by Menassah Ben Israel. See his Exposition of Exod. p. 137. It is abundantly evident that Philo did not derive his opinions from Plato; but rather Plato, by conversing with Jews in Egypt, borrowed his best notions from them. See Jameison's Vindication of the Deity of Christ, fol. 1. p. 22. Simpson's Deity of Christ, p. 415, No. 29.

§ 3. I will now call your attention to the promised propositions.

1st. We read of one called the angel Jehovah, who appeared under the Old Testament to different persons.

2d. This angel Jehovah our Rabbins call by different names.

3d. In all these appearances they say it was the self-same person.

4th. This angel Jehovah they believed to have been the promised Messiah, who was to become incarnate.

5th. To this angel Jehovah are ascribed the incommunicable names, titles, &c. of Jehovah, and therefore he could not have been a created angel.

6th. This angel Jehovah was not the Father, but a distinct person from him.

7th. Hence it is evident that our ancient, and some modern Rabbins, believed the Messiah to be Jehovah, the true and living God, the second person in the blessed Trinity.

I proceed to illustrate these propositions, and begin with the first.

§ 4. The angel Jehovah appeared to the following persons:

To Hagar, Gen. 16: 7–14.

To Abraham, Gen. 22: 11, 12, 15–18.

To Jacob, Gen. 28: 10–22, and 35: 1, 7—compare 48: 15, 16—see also 32: 24–30—compare Hosea, 12: 1–5.

To Moses, Exod. chap. 3.

To Joshua, Josh. 5: 13–15; 6: 2.

To Gideon, Judges, 6: 11–24.

To Manoah and his wife, Judges, 13: 2–13.

Instead of transcribing at large every one of these appearances, which would extend the subject too much, I would beg my beloved Benjamin to take his Bible and read the places referred to.

§ 5. This angel our Rabbins call by different names, such as the *Shechina*, *Memra*, *Logos*, the Word of the Lord, the Angel of the covenant, the Mediator, the Redeemer, the Messiah, the Only Begotten, and the Creator.

With respect to the Shechina, I need only to bring to the recollection of my dear Benjamin, that R. Menachem teaches, in the name of the most ancient and renowned Rabbins, that it was the Shechina which appeared to Adam, immediately after he had sinned, and clothed him, fo. 59: 4; that he appeared to Abraham, fo. 35: 2; to Jacob, fo. 36: 2, and 41: 42; to Moses, Exod. 3, fo. 55: 12; to the people on Mount Sinai, fo. 56: 2; and that it was the Shechina that gave the law, fo. 57: 2, 3; 58: 1; 84: 1, 2.

To the same Shechina they give the name of Adam from above, after whose image Adam was created; and they give to him the title of exalted and blessed, which they give to the true God only; and they say also that it was he to whom Noah sacrificed; that the temple was built to the honor of the Shechina, and that it was to him, and not to the ark, that the Levites said, "Arise, O Lord, unto thy rest, thou and the ark of thy strength." Psa. 132: 8; and

we are further told, that by this Shechina is meant the living God, the Angel of the covenant, the God of Jacob, and the angel that redeemed him, whom the prophets called the angel of his presence. See R. Menachem, fo. 2: 1; 40: 3; 20: 2; 27: 1; 34: 4; 38: 3; 73: 1, and 83: 4.

§ 6. With respect to the *Memra*, or the word of the Lord, our Rabbins teach as follows: In Gen. 3: 8, it is said they heard the *word*, instead of the voice; in this view, all the Targums agree. The Jerusalem Targum begins the next verse in this manner: "And the *word* of the Lord God called unto Adam;" another says, "They heard the word of the Lord God walking." On this passage we have the following observation in Sepher Zeror Hammor: "Before they sinned, they saw the glory of the blessed God speaking with *him*, i. e. with God; but after their sin, they only heard the voice walking." See Ber. Rab. in Loco.

Ankelos paraphrases Gen. 31: 22, "And the *word* from before the *Lord* came to Satan;" and Exod. 20: 19, "Let not the *word* from before the *Lord* speak with us, lest we die."

The Memra is also called the Mediator.

According to the Jerusalem Targum on Gen. 21: 33, "Abraham at Beersheba prayed in the name of the word of the Lord, the God of the world." Deut. 4: 7, is thus paraphrased by Jonathan: "God is near, and the name of the word of the Lord;" and, Jer. 29: 14, he says, "I will be sought by you and by my word, and I will be inquired of through you by my word." Again in Hosea, 4: 9, "God will receive the prayer of Israel by his word, and have mercy upon them, and will make them by his word like a beautiful fig-tree." This is in perfect conformity with our Rabbins, who, when supplicating God, entreated him that he would look on the face of his anointed.

Further, the Memra is also called the Redeemer and the Messiah.

In the Jerusalem Targum, the words of dying Jacob, Gen. 49 : 18, "I have waited for thy salvation," are thus paraphrased: "Our father Jacob said, my soul expects not the redemption of Gideon, the son of Joash, which is a temporal salvation, nor that of Sampson, which is a transitory salvation, but the redemption which thou didst promise should come through the Memra to thy people." The reader will take notice, that what the Jerusalem Targum calls the Memra, Jonathan calls the Messiah; for says he, "I expect the redemption of the Messiah, the Son of David, who shall come to gather to himself the people of Israel." That by the *word*, the paraphrasts understood the Messiah, is evident from their interpretation of the 110th Psalm, v. 1, "The Lord said unto his word," i. e. unto the Messiah, for this passage has ever been applied to him, (p. 261, 308.) The promise of the seed of the woman, applied by our Rabbins to the Messiah, (p. 150,) is applied by the Targum to the angel who says, "And that Adam knew his wife Eve, who desired the angel, and she conceived and bare Cain, and said, I have obtained a man, the angel of the Lord." Now as Jehovah is the word used in the original, we cannot conceive that the interpreter would have given this paraphrase, had he not known that it was believed by his countrymen, that he who was revealed in sacred Scripture as the angel of the Lord, was Jehovah or the true God, and also that he was to be incarnate as the angel of the covenant, or Messiah.

We observe once more, that the Memra is also described as the only begotten, the Creator.

Thus the remarkable verse, Gen. 3 : 22, "The Lord God said, behold the man has become as one of us," is in the Jerusalem Targum paraphrased in the following striking manner: "The word of the Lord said, behold Adam whom I have created, the only begotten in the world, as I am the only begotten in the highest heavens." You will

notice, my dear Benjamin, how similar the language of our ancient Rabbins is to the language of the New Testament. "In the beginning was the word—all things were made by him—we beheld his glory as the glory of the only begotten of the Father." John, 1 : 1, 3, 14.

§ 7. I proceed to consider the next proposition, viz. that all these appearances of the angel Jehovah are ascribed to the same person.

R. Moses. Gerundensis, Nechmanni, when explaining Joshua, 5 : 14, where we have an account of the appearance of one called the "Captain of the Lord's host," he says, "This angel, if we speak exactly, is the Angel Redeemer, of whom it is written, my name is in him, that very angel who said to Jacob, Gen. 31 : 13, I am the God of Bethel, he of whom it is said, and God called to Moses out of the bush. Exod. 3 : 4. He is called an angel, because he governs the world; for it is written, Deut. 6 : 21, The Lord brought you out of Egypt, and Num. 20 : 6, He sent his angel and brought you out of Egypt. Besides it is written, Isa. 63 : 9, And the angel of his face saved them. He is that angel who is the face of God, of whom it is said, Exod. 33 : 14, My face shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. In fine, he is that angel of whom the prophet Malachi says, c. 3 : 4, 'And the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in.'" Again he says, "Diligently attend to the meaning of these words, 'my face shall go before thee;' for Moses and the Israelites always desired the chief angel, but who this was they could not truly understand: for neither did they learn it from others, nor could they sufficiently attain it by prophecy. But the face of God signifies God himself, which is acknowledged by all our interpreters. But no one could have the least notion of these things, unless he be truly instructed in the mysteries of the law." Again he says, "My face shall go before

you, i. e. the angel of the covenant whom ye desire, in whom my face shall be seen, of whom it is said, in an acceptable time have I heard thee, my name is in him, and I will cause thee to rest; for I will cause that he shall be gentle and benign to thee, neither shall he lead thee with rigor, but calmly and mercifully." Wolf. Synops. Joshua, 5 : 14; Owen, Heb. fo. 1. ex. 10, p. 129.

Concerning this angel, R. Solomon, on Gen. 48 : 16, says: "The angel that delivered me, (that is Jacob,) that is the angel who was wont to be sent to me in my affliction, as it is said, the angel of the Lord spake to me in a dream, saying, Jacob, I am the God of Bethel, he of whom it is said, my name is in him." Again he says on Exod. 3, where the appearance of the angel Jehovah is mentioned, "This is he of whom it is said, and God called to Moses out of the bush; he is called angel, because he governs the world; for it is written in one place, Jehovah brought us out of Egypt, and again, the angel of his presence saved them, i. e. the angel who is the face of God, of whom it is said, my face shall go before you." Lastly,

The angel of whom the prophet Malachi speaks: "And the Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Angel of the covenant whom ye desire." At length he adds, "The face of God is God himself, as all interpreters do acknowledge, but no one can rightly understand this without being instructed in the law."

R. Menachem of Reka on the same passage (Gen. 48 : 16) says, "He (i. e. Jacob) means the Shechina whom he speaks of as the redeeming angel." See also R. Bechai, fo. 71, c. 4. Menassah Ben Israel, Quer. 64. Gen. p. 118, and Aben. Sueb. on the same text.

§ 8. I proceed now to show that all the incommunicable names, titles, attributes, &c. are ascribed to this angel Jehovah, and therefore he could not be a created angel. This proposition will appear evident, if we examine the different

appearances of this angel referred to before. The first is that to Hagar. Here you will observe, my dear Benjamin, that she called him God; and in verse 13 we are assured that he was Jehovah, for she called the name Jehovah that spake unto her, "Thou Jehovah seest me." This expression may be considered as a personal character, signifying, not merely that the name Jehovah was given him, but that it was in him, (Exod. 23 : 21,) as possessing the same nature with the Father. Hagar did not call him God who spake by the angel, but she called the name of the Lord that spake to her God. Further: she ascribes the attribute of omniscience to him, for she called him the God that saw her; he revealed himself, and she believed in him as one to whom divine works belong; ver. 10. She gave this angel divine worship, for she addressed him in the language of faith and praise, and in the ascription of divine perfection to him, ver. 13, "Thou God seest me:" thus, in this single appearance of this angel, we find all the criteria of divinity appropriated to him.

The Chaldee paraphrase translates the 13th verse, "And she called *on* the name of the Lord who spake with her." And the Jerusalem Targum says, "She *prayed* in the name of the Word as of the Lord that was revealed unto her, and said, Blessed art thou, O God!" Here is prayer and praise ascribed to the angel. Further: the angel promised, "I will make of him a great nation," which requires the *almighty* power of God to perform.

§ 9. Now, my dear Benjamin, I wish you well to consider that Hagar either believed him to be a mere angel, or a Divine being. If the former, then she was a willful blasphemer and idolater. If the latter, but by mistake, (i. e. she believed him to be a Divine person, but was mistaken,) then she was led into this most fatal mistake by the mode in which God communicated his will to her, which we cannot believe. Nor would God have accepted such ignorant

and idolatrous worship; nor would this angel have suffered such conduct more than he who said, "See thou do it not; I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God." Rev. 19: 10. You will further observe that it could not have been the Father, for he is never called an angel, and has never been seen by any creature, as has been shown before. And although some may tell us, but without proof, that a mere angel often assumes the name and claims the attributes of Jehovah, yet it is not credible that our fathers, who were so superstitiously tender of the name Jehovah that they would neither pronounce or write it lest they should take it in vain, would ever think of conferring it, or imagine that it was conferred by God on a created angel; when, therefore, they call this angel the *Word*, it argues a conviction that he was both distinct from the Father and equal to him. Now, this angel, called by the paraphrasts the *Word*, is called in the text Jehovah, is the object of prayer, and promises to multiply her seed, and therefore was the true God.

The remainder of this subject we will consider in the next letter. Farewell.

Yes, there is one of human frame,
  Jesus, array'd in flesh and blood,
Thinks it no robbery to claim
  A full equality with God.

Their glory shines with equal beams;
  Their essence is for ever one;
Though they are known by different names,
  The Father God, and God the Son.

Letter V.

THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

Dear Brother,

I will now invite your attention to the remainder of the appearances of the angel Jehovah, and commence with that to Abraham our venerable father.

§ 1. First, that which is recorded in Genesis, chap. 19. Here you will observe that the person who appeared to Abraham and spake about the destruction of Sodom, is repeatedly called Jehovah, but could not be Jehovah, the Father, for the reasons just mentioned, that he never appeared or was seen by any creature; but of this angel it is said that he was on the earth, for "Abraham stood yet before the Lord; and Abraham drew near, and Jehovah went his way." It was, therefore, the Memra, the word Jehovah, as is acknowledged by the Jerusalem Targum on Gen. 18: 2. "Three angels were sent unto our father Abraham; and these three were sent for three purposes, since it is impossible for one of the highest angels to be sent but for one thing. The first angel was sent to tell our father Abraham that Sarah should bring forth Isaac; the second was sent to deliver Lot out of the midst of the overthrow; the third angel was sent to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim. Therefore he was the prophetic *Memra*, word, and the *Memra*, word of the Lord, appeared to him in the valley of vision." Philo also, on the same passage, calls him the Memra, word of the Lord.

This Jehovah, or the word of the Lord, who destroyed Sodom, was a distinct person from Jehovah who was then in heaven; for it is said, Gen. 19: 24, "Jehovah rained upon

Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from Jehovah out of heaven." He who is called the word of the Lord, our Rabbins teach to be the same as he who is called the Angel Jehovah. Now this person assumes unto himself several of the incommunicable criteria. He is not only *called* Jehovah, but Abraham knew that it *was* Jehovah, for he calls him by that name, and also "the Judge of all the earth," and directed his supplications in behalf of the cities to him. There is, therefore, in this place, an appearance of Jehovah in a human shape, and that of *one distinct person* from Jehovah in heaven; and as the Father and the Holy Ghost never appeared, as is acknowledged by our Rabbins, it must have been the Son of God, the second person in the blessed Trinity, who now presented himself to Abraham in the form and shape wherein he would dwell amongst men, when of his seed he should be made flesh. Herein was at once a revelation of his Divine nature and person, and a pledge of his incarnation. And it is more than probable that our Lord and Savior referred to this as one prominent instance in which Abraham saw his day and was glad. John, 8 : 56, 58.

§ 2. Passing by the appearance of the same person mentioned Gen. 20, and again chap. 21, permit me to call your particular attention to that recorded Gen. 22, Abraham offering up his only son Isaac. Here you find the angel speaking twice to Abraham out of heaven. In ver. 11, 12, he claims sovereign dominion, in having commanded Abraham to offer up his son; he receives divine worship, the offering up of an only son, and declares that he was the object of Abraham's fear, which is another part of divine worship.

In his second address, in verses 15–18, he renews the divine covenant, enlarges divine promises, and confirms them by an oath; and not being able to swear by a greater, (says the inspired writer in the epistle to our forefathers, Heb. 6 : 13,) he swore by himself.

Now, my dear Benjamin, who could believe that our fa-

ther Abraham would offer his son to a creature, or that any angel would dare to claim such an unusual act of worship? In vain is it said that the angel only repeated the words of Jehovah, because of the sentence in ver. 16, "says Jehovah." Let it be noticed that this sentence is not in his first address, verses 15, 16; and yet he says, "thou hast not withheld thy son from me." Now, if the speaker, on this occasion, was a created angel, the proof that satisfied him that Abraham truly feared God, (seeing he was willing to offer up his son to the speaker, a mere creature,) was the strangest that could be imagined. Instead of being a proof that he feared God, it would have been the most daring act of idolatry.

Further: the very place mentioned where this angel spoke, both on this occasion and that of Hagar, evidently distinguishes him from a created angel; for it is mentioned as the prerogative of Jehovah to speak from heaven, and he appeals to it as an evidence of his Deity. "And the Lord said unto Moses, thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven; ye shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold." Exod. 20 : 22, 23. Again Moses says, "Unto thee it was showed that thou mightest know that the Lord he is God; there is none else beside him: out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee." Deut. 4 : 36, 37. This simple circumstance of speaking out of heaven, is a proof of omniscience and of almighty power. See Psa. 68 : 32–35. Neh. 9 : 27, 28.

§ 3. The next appearance of this angel is that to our father Jacob when he fled from his brother Esau, and was favored with a very singular and encouraging vision from the Almighty, who declared himself to be the God of his fathers Abraham and Isaac. You have doubtless, my dear Benjamin, read and compared the passages formerly re-

commended to you, in which you will observe that he who is called the God of our fathers Abraham and Isaac, is also called an angel; and you will again remember that Jehovah the Father never appeared nor is ever called an angel, and that our Rabbins ascribe all these appearances to the self-same person, even to the Messiah, who should hereafter become incarnate. Examine then carefully what is said by this angel, and what our father Jacob ascribed to him, and you will plainly perceive that most if not all the divine criteria are ascribed to him, and therefore he must be Jehovah the true God, in unison with, but distinct from Jehovah the Father. Let us further notice, in connection with this appearance, the appearance that is recorded Gen. 32, where we read of a man wrestling with Jacob, and by comparing this account with what is said in Hosea, 12 : 3–5, we find that this man is called by different names, viz. God, Jehovah, and the God of hosts, and that it was the same that appeared to Jacob at Bethel. Here then we have, besides the name Jehovah, the title of the God of hosts also. Now this is the peculiar title of the true God, he that is supreme over all the hosts or armies of heaven and earth, as appears from the following passages: "And David arose and went with all the people that were with him from Baal of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the Lord of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubims." 2 Sam. 6 : 2; and again, "Let thy name be magnified for ever, saying, the Lord of hosts is the God of Israel," chap. 2 : 26; again, "Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory." Ps. 24 : 10. Again it is said, "And one cried unto another and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory." Isa. 6 : 3. You will further notice that divine worship is paid to this angel: "And he wept and made supplication to him." Also, divine work is ascribed to him: "To bless him there;" and Jacob made a religious vow unto him.

§ 4. Now this angel at Bethel calls himself Jehovah the God of Abraham and of Isaac. He assumes the incommunicable attribute of omnipresence, "I will be with thee;" and of almighty power, "I will increase and multiply." No created angel but devils only would do so. Jacob must have believed him to be the true God, else he would have been guilty of idolatry. To what has been said we may add the remarkable saying of the patriarch Jacob at the time of his death, concerning the self-same angel, recorded Gen. 48: 15, 16, "And he blessed Joseph and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads." From these words it appears indeed that it was an angel that had appeared and spoken to him at Bethel; but if he considered him as a mere creature, instead of being a saint, he would have been a gross idolater; for he not only gave this angel his faith and worship, but ascribed the whole of his salvation, both temporal and eternal, to him as God, trusting in him and praying to him for all blessings when performing his last duty to his children. Further: if Jacob was an idolater in worshiping this angel, our fathers Abraham and Isaac were the same, for he declared that this angel was the God before whom they walked, an expression which includes the most solemn religious acts of piety, worship and devotedness to God. Hence Enoch and Noah are characterized by this expression. Gen. 5: 22; 6: 9. Nay, he solemnly transmitted this idolatry to his posterity. Now in this case can we justify God from the charge of enticing his servants to idolatry, by allowing a messenger of his, a mere creature, to address them in such language that they could not consider him any other than God? Nay, on this supposition, can we give any credit to the Scriptures as a divine revelation, since these men are still exhibited as true worshipers?

§ 5. We proceed to the remarkable appearances of this angel to Moses, recorded in Exod. 3. Here, my dear Benjamin, you will observe that the person who appeared to Moses in the burning bush is called the angel Jehovah, ver. 2; the same person calls himself "I am that I am," ver. 14; gives Moses his commission to go to the children of Israel, and to say unto them, "The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob has sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations. Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say unto them, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me." Ver. 15, 16. And the same person commissions him to go with the elders of Israel and say unto them, "The Lord God of the Hebrews has met with us, and now let us go." Ver. 18. That he who appeared in the bush, and he who spoke to Moses, was the self-same person, is further evident from chap. 4: 1, 5: "For they will say, the Lord has not appeared unto thee—that they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has appeared unto thee." To this angel Moses gave divine worship; for when he blessed the tribe of Joseph with the divine blessing and favor of God, he calls it the "good will of him that dwelt in the bush." Deut. 3: 16. Now, my dear Benjamin, does it not appear to you most clearly from the whole context, and especially by his saying "I am Jehovah, the God of Abraham," &c. &c. that this angel was not a creature? The angels never speak that language in Scripture, but "I am sent from God," and "I am thy fellow-servant," &c. &c. It is a vain pretence to say that the angel, as God's ambassador, speaks in God's name and person; for what ambassador of any king in the world did ever speak thus: "I am the king," &c.? Ministers are God's ambassadors; but if any of them

should say, "I am the Lord," they would be guilty of blasphemy; and so would any created angel too, for the same reason.

§ 6. The next appearance to which I would call the attention of my dear Benjamin, is that to Joshua the son of Nun, the first time near Jericho, Joshua, 5: 13–15; this person calls himself the captain, or rather prince of the Lord's host, and makes use of the same words as the angel did to Moses: "Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy;" and receives divine worship, and ascribes to himself the government of the world: "I have given into thy hands Jericho," &c.; secondly, he appeared unto him at Bochim, saying, "I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I sware unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you." Judges, 2: 1. Here you will observe again, that this angel claims the covenant with Abraham to be his covenant; that it was he that made the promises to the fathers, and confirmed them by an oath; that he brought the children of Israel out of Egypt and led them to the land of Canaan, and reproved them for not obeying his voice; which makes it evident that it was he that was promised to be their leader, saying, "Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way and to bring thee unto the place which I have prepared: beware of him and obey his voice; provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him." Exod. 23: 20, 21.

§ 7. The same angel Jehovah appeared to Gideon, according to Judges, 6: 11–24. Here again he is called the angel Jehovah, and also Jehovah. He claims the honor of sending Gideon. He promises to him his own presence, and by a mere look he communicates strength to him. Gideon addresses him as the object of prayer, and the sign he received is the same as the prophet Elijah asked to con-

vince the worshipers of Baal of the nature and presence of Jehovah, 1 Kings, 18 : 24, and by this sign Gideon became convinced that it was not a created angel, but Jehovah himself that spoke to him, and hence he was afraid he should die.

§ 8. The last of these appearances I shall name, is that to Manoah and his wife. Judges, 13 : 2–22.

That they understood that he who spoke to them was Jehovah is evident, for they, like Gideon, were afraid that they should die because they had seen God. This angel says that his name is Wonderful, the same name which is given to the Messiah by the prophet Isaiah, 9 : 6, and it was doubtless to this angel they offered a sacrifice.

§ 9. These different manifestations of the Angel Jehovah are beautifully summed up by the learned Eusebius in the following manner: "I will here explain myself upon the fundamental point of Christ's divinity and humanity, so as to silence those adversaries who call the Christian religion a new and upstart institution. They are, therefore, desired to understand that its Author's nature and substance is of an existence ineffably eternal; for 'who shall declare his generation? No one has known the Father but the Son, and no one the Son but the Father;' with whom and from whom he subsisted from everlasting, the glorious minister of his will; by whom, as he created, so he governs all things, his only begotten Son, truly God: for 'in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him, and without him was nothing made.' Accordingly Moses assures us that the Father communicated with him his counsel of creating man, where he says, 'Let us make man after our image.' To the same effect the Psalmist: 'He spake and they were made, he commanded and they were created.' The Father pronounced his pleasure, which the Son administered. This is he whom the patriarchs and the prophets, both before and

after Moses, beheld frequently exhibited before their eyes, and as frequently received with adorations. This is the Lord God that appeared to Abraham in a human shape, before whom he kneeled, and to whom he addressed himself in these words: 'Shall not the Lord of all the earth judge righteously?' The Scripture cannot lie, nor the Godhead become a human body; so that unless by the 'Lord of the whole earth' in this place is meant the first begotten cause of things, which it cannot be, it must signify the Logos, or Word; concerning whom the Psalmist says, 'He sent out his Word and healed them, and they were saved from their destruction.' This is that Lord 'that rained fire upon Sodom and Gomorrah from the Lord out of heaven;' that God who wrestled with Jacob, and from whom he called the place where they strove, 'The vision of God,' because he had seen him face to face. Nor were these the appearance of angels; the Scripture ascribing them not, as at other times, to angels, but to God. Thus again, when he presented himself in the form of a man before Joshua, he tells him the place is sanctified by his presence; at which Joshua falls upon his knees and acknowledges him 'Captain of the host of the Lord.' So we find the place where he talked with Moses consecrated by his presence; for he was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the Wisdom of God before the foundations of the world,' that pitched his tabernacle with prudence, and called to him knowledge and understanding; by whom princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth; whom the Lord created in the beginning of his ways, before his works of old. That it pleased the divine goodness to manifest itself, till the world being prepared for the entertainment of his divine truths, the Son of God came incarnate to perform, to teach and to suffer whatever the prophets had foretold concerning him; and lastly to receive that kingdom, that universal, everlasting dominion, which the prophet Daniel represents him invested

with, in the midst of thousand thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand. All these characteristics are applicable only to the eternal Word incarnate." Ecclesiast. Hist. L. 1st, c. 2.

§ 10. In closing the observations on this subject, I cheerfully adopt, as has been hinted before, the opinion of those who suppose that the appearances of the angel Jehovah were probably intended as a prelude or earnest of his assuming human nature in the fullness of time, and his dwelling among mortals. He was the immediate agent in the creation of the world, and the Father devolved upon him the whole economy of providence from the beginning; and hence he had frequent occasions to appear on some grand design. It cannot seem incredible that he should thus assume some visible form to such as believe that God was at length really manifested in the flesh; for this temporary apparent incarnation cannot be deemed more strange than his really being made flesh and dwelling among us.

§ 11. From what has been said on the different appearances of this angel Jehovah, where we have seen that he assumed the names, titles, and attributes of the true and living God, promised to perform the works peculiar to Deity, confirmed those promises by an oath in the manner peculiar to Jehovah, and received with approbation the highest acts of worship; by these considerations I hope my dear Benjamin will be convinced that he was really Jehovah, a distinct person from Jehovah the Father, the Messiah who should, in due time, become incarnate. And before I proceed any further, permit me, my dear brother, once more to observe, that to say that this angel, or any other messenger of Jehovah, may assume any of the divine criteria, because he came in the name and by the authority of the true God, is not only a vain evasion, but it is against reason and Scripture, and the united sentiment of our ancient Rabbins.

Is it reasonable to believe that a holy angel would be so assuming and presumptuous as to personate God, without some plain distinguishing marks of his own inferiority? How different was the conduct of Paul and Barnabas when the priests of Jupiter would offer sacrifices to them! they rent their clothes and ran in among the people, crying out, saying, "Sirs, why do ye these things? we are men of like passions with you." Acts, 14 : 13–15. In like manner when John fell at the feet of an angel to worship him, the angel said, "See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God." Rev. 19 : 10.

The following remark, I doubt not, my dear Benjamin will read with pleasure: "An earthly ambassador, indeed, represents the person of his prince; is supposed to be clothed with his authority, and speaks and acts in his name. But who ever heard of an ambassador assuming the very name of his sovereign, or being honored with it by others? Would one in this character be permitted to say, *I, George; I, Louis; I, Frederick?* As the idea is ridiculous, the action would justly be accounted high treason. Would the most illustrious plenipotentiary, referring to a treaty made by his sovereign with a neighboring power, and declaring his fixed resolution to abide by it, say, *I will never break my covenant with you?* or if sent to undutiful subjects to remind them of his master's kindness and their own ingratitude, would he presume to say, *I brought you* into this fertile country which you now possess, but ye have not obeyed *my voice?* Do not ambassadors, however great their powers in all memorials and deeds of every kind spoken or written, still use their own names, and distinguish themselves from their royal masters? And can we suppose that the humble minister of the King of kings may use far greater freedom with his names, attributes, works, and honors, than those of a petty fellow-worm with his? Satan is

the only angel that we read of who ever claimed the honor due to God." Jamieson's Vindication, P. 110.

Would not such conduct be an unavoidable temptation to give divine honors to a creature, and thus be guilty of idolatry?

Besides, would a holy and jealous God permit one of his messengers to assume to himself that glory which he has so frequently declared (as has been shown before) that he would give it to no other?

No! The religion of the Bible, my dear Benjamin, is *rational*, and does not admit of such a supposition.

§ 12. Before I dismiss the subject I would notice the gracious promise of Jehovah to our fathers, of an angel that should be their guide and protector through the wilderness, and bring them safely to the land of Canaan. It is recorded, Exod. 23 : 20–23, "Behold, I send an angel before thee to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared; beware of him, and obey his voice; provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him. But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak, then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries; for my angel shall go before thee and bring thee in unto the Amorites," &c. Now, of this angel it is said, *beware of him*, or rather take heed to thyself before him: this is the caution that is usually given to people requiring that reverence and awe which is due unto the presence of the holiness of God. "*Obey his voice;*" this is the great precept which is solemnly given, and so often repeated in the law with reference unto God himself. Again it is said, *provoke him not*, or rebel not against him. This is the usual word whereby God expresses the transgression of his covenant, a rebellion that can be against God alone.

Further: of these precepts a two-fold reason is given. First, the sovereign authority of this angel, *for he will not*

pardon your transgressions; that is, as Joshua afterwards tells the same people, "He is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins." Joshua, 24: 19.

Now, who can forgive sins but God? To suppose here a created angel, is to open a door unto idolatry; for he in whose power it is absolutely to pardon and punish sins, may certainly be worshiped with religious adoration.

The next reason is, *for my name is in him,** a more excellent name than any of the angels do enjoy. Heb. 1: 4. He is God Jehovah; that is his name, and his nature answers thereunto; hence, verse 22, it is added, *if indeed thou obey his voice and do all that I speak.* His voice is the voice

* Had a mere delegation of authority been meant, it would have been more properly expressed "He comes," or "acts in my name," or "my name is in him;" but the language cannot, with propriety, convey any idea but that of identity of essence. It does not denote any thing external and adventitious, but something internal and essential, for it literally is, "my name is in his inward part." Name is often put for thing or being, human or divine; thus, Rev. 11: 13, we read of 7,000 men. In the original it is Onomata Anthropon, i. e. names of men. In like manner the glorious and fearful name, the Lord thy God, (Deut. 28: 58,) is no other than Jehovah himself. So in Ps. 20: 1, the name of the God of Jacob, i. e. the Lord God of Jacob, who is the defence of his people. Besides, these words contain a reason for what is declared immediately before, "He will not pardon your transgressions." Now, this declaration, in its connection, leads us to the sense in which we are here to understand the name of God. The divine perfection of justice is ascribed to this angel, and in this respect God's name is said to be in him. The language evidently directs us to that solemn proclamation which Jehovah made of his name as the Lord God, who will by no means clear the guilty, or, as it may be read, hold it, that is, sin, innocent; chap. 34: 5, 7. What was this but a proclamation of his nature? When, therefore, he says of this angel, he will not pardon, for my name is in him, he assures the Israelites that although this glorious person appeared as his messenger, he was to be viewed by them in the same light with himself as essentially possessing all that this name denotes, and particularly as that God to whom vengeance belongs. Deut. 32: 35.

of God; in his speaking does God speak, and upon the people's obedience thereunto depends the accomplishment of the promise. Moreover, chap. 33 : 14, 15, God says concerning this angel, "My presence," i. e. "my face shall go with thee," which presence Moses calls his glory; ver. 18; his essential glory which was manifested unto him; chap. 34 : 6; though but obscurely in comparison of what it was unto them who in his human nature, wherein dwelt the "fullness of the Godhead bodily," Col. 2 : 9, beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. John, 1 : 14. For this face of God is he,whom, whosoever seeth, "he seeth the Father also." John, 14 : 19. Because he is "the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person." Heb. 1 : 3. These things evidently express God, and none other; and yet he is said to be an angel sent of God in his name, and unto his work; so that he can be no other but the second person in the blessed Trinity who accepted of this delegation, and was therein revealed unto the fathers as he who was to take upon him the seed of Abraham, their eternal Redeemer.

§ 13. To close this part of our subject, I will observe that it is further evident that our ancient Rabbins expected that the Messiah was a divine person, from those passages which they applied to the Messiah, in which he is the object of divine worship, such as Psa. 2 : 12, where all people are commanded to love him, and to put their trust in him. See also Psa. 45 : 10, 11; 72 : 5, 8, 11, 15 and 17. That they applied these Psalms to the Messiah, see vol. I. pp. 120, 257.

Further: our Rabbins frequently speak of the Messiah as the Son of God. The Jerusalem Targum, on Gen. 3 : 22, says, "Jehovah said, Here, Adam whom I created, is the only begotten son on the earth, as I am the only begotten Son (Yachid) in the high heaven;" on Prov. 30 : 4, "What is his name, and what is his son's name?" The Zohar an-

swers, "Messiah;" fo. 119. c. 473. On Psa. 89 : 25, 26, "I will set his hand in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers; he shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father!" All the Targums apply this to the Messiah. On Psa. 2 : 7, "Thou art my Son," the Zohar interprets it thus: "This Son is the faithful Shepherd, and he is the Prince of Israel, the Lord of things below, the Lord of ministering angels, the Son of the Highest, the Son of the God of the universe, the gracious Shechinah, he is the King Messiah;" fo. 88. c. 348. R. Sol. Yarchi says, "What is the name of the Messiah? Abba, the son of Cashmah, replies, Jehovah is his name, for it is written, (Jer. 23 : 6,) 'And this is his name whereby he shall be called, Jehovah our Righteousness.'" Lam. p. 68. R. Alshech says, "Who will he be that shall thus call on Jerusalem to comfort her according to that exhortation, 'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call on her?' (Isa. 40 : 2.) Is it not he, even Jehovah our Righteousness, the King Messiah? as it is written, and he is Jehovah from his righteousness and just conduct." Comment. on Jer. 33, p. 98. c. 2. Hence our people, in the days of Christ Jesus, expected the Messiah to be the Son of God, as is evident from the following passages:

"Thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." John, 1 : 49. "We believe and are sure that thou art Christ the Son of the living God." John, 6 : 69. "Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." Matthew, 16 : 16. Martha says, "Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, who should come into the world." John, 11 : 27. The high priest says, "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God." Matthew, 26 : 63. Hear also the confession of devils, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God?" Matthew, 8 : 29.

§ 14. Now, my dear Benjamin, I have endeavored to prove, both from the sacred Scriptures and the testimonies

of our Rabbins, and I humbly hope to your perfect satisfaction, the doctrine of the Trinity of persons in the unity of Jehovah; and that the Messiah was expected to be the second person in the blessed Trinity. I should, perhaps, not have detained you so long, were it not to show that these all-important truths are as ancient as the Bible, and not "modern inventions, the invention of priestcraft and the mere productions of the illiterate fishermen."

And now, may the God of all grace open your eyes that you may behold wondrous things out of his word. Psa. 119: 18. Farewell.

Ere the blue heavens were stretch'd abroad,
  From everlasting was the Word;
With God he was, the Word was God,
  And must divinely be ador'd.

By his own power all things were made;
  By him supported all things stand;
He is the whole creation's head,
  And angels fly at his command.

Ere sin was born or Satan fell,
  He led the host of morning stars;
(Thy generation who can tell,
  Or count the number of thy years?)

But lo! he leaves those heavenly forms;
  The Word descends and dwells in clay;
That he may converse hold with worms,
  Dress'd in such feeble flesh as they.

PART III.

JESUS IS TRULY GOD.

Letter I.

SIMILARITY BETWEEN CHRIST AND THE ANGEL.

Dear Brother Benjamin,

Permit me now to call your attention to a subject to me the most interesting and important, viz. the divinity of Jesus Christ, my blessed Lord and Savior. To establish this truth, I will show, first,

That he is the angel Jehovah.

This is evident,

§ 1. 1st, From the striking similarity between him and that angel who appeared under the Old Testament. I will select but a few particulars.

Did the angel appear as a man? Gen. 32:24; Judges, 13:16. So Christ became incarnate.

Did the angel assert that he was sent by Jehovah, and yet that he was equal with him? Zech. 2:11, 12. So did Christ.

Did the angel call himself the "I am?" Exod. 3. So did Christ. John, 8:58.

Did Jacob call the angel *Goail*, i. e. Kinsman, Redeemer? Gen. 48:16. So did Christ become our kinsman.

Was the angel sent to reveal the will of Jehovah? So Christ came from the bosom of his Father.

Did the angel make the covenant with Abraham? Judges, 2:1. So Christ was given as a covenant to the people. Isa. 42:6.

Was the angel the captain of the Lord's host? Joshua, 5 : 14. So Christ is the captain of our salvation. Heb. 2 : 10.

Did the angel in love and pity redeem his people? Isa. 63 : 9. So Christ loved the Church and gave himself for her. Eph. 5 : 25.

Was it the prerogative of the angel to forgive sins? Zech. 3 : 4. So does Christ. Acts, 5 : 3.

Did the angel intercede for Joshua? Zech. 3 : 2. So did Christ for Peter. Luke, 22 : 32.

Did the angel bless Abraham and Jacob? Gen. 22 : 17; 32 : 29. So does Christ bless his people. Acts, 3 : 26.

Did the angel commission Moses? Exod. 3 : 2, 14. So does Christ commission his apostles. Matt. 28 : 19.

Did the angel put his spirit in them? Isa. 63 : 11. So did Christ send his holy Spirit.

Did the angel govern the world? Gen. 21 : 18; 22 : 17. So Christ had all power in heaven and on earth.

Did the angel employ other angels as his ministers? Zech. 1 : 11; 2 : 3, 4; 6 : 8. So does Christ. Heb. 1 : 14.

Did the angel speak out of heaven? Gen. 21 : 17; 22 : 15. So did Christ. John, 3 : 13. Heb. 12 : 25.

Was the angel promised as a leader to Israel? Exod. 23 : 21. So is Christ. Isa. 55 : 4.

Was it dangerous to offend this angel? Exod. 23 : 21. Much more to disobey Christ. Heb. 2 : 3; 12 : 25.

How beautiful, my dear Benjamin, is the harmony of the Old and New Testaments. Moses bore witness of Jesus, and Jesus came to fulfill all that was written of him. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." John, 1 : 17.

§ 2. It further appears that Jesus is the angel Jehovah, from the united testimony of Christian writers.

The learned Dr. Jordan tells us "that all the visible or audible manifestations of God, of which mention is made

in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, seem to have been appearances of the Word, or the Son of God, acting and speaking in his Father's name; as after the incarnation he acted and spake in his own person; as when he appeared to St. Stephen, to St. Paul, and to other saints and disciples. In this the ancient Christians and most of the moderns are agreed." Ser. fol. 4. p. 218.

Dr. Samuel Clarke speaks somewhat more at large. He says: "It is the constant doctrine of all the primitive writers of the Church, that every appearance of God the Father in the Old Testament, was Christ appearing in the name or person of the Father, in the form of God, as being the image of the invisible God, Col. 1 : 15; of him 'whom no man hath seen at any time.' John, 1 : 18; of him whom no man hath seen or can see. 1 Tim. 1 : 16." Script. Doct. p. 93. Again he says: "It is the unanimous opinion of all antiquity, that the angel who said, I am the God of thy fathers, Acts, 7 : 30, 31, 32, was Christ the angel of the covenant, Mal. 3 : 1; the angel of God's presence, Isa. 63 : 9; and in whom the name of God was, Exod. 23 : 21, speaking in the name of the invisible Father. See Gen. 16 : 10; again, Gen. 31 : 11, 13, and 48 : 15; Hos. 12 : 3, 4, and Zech. 12 : 8." Ibid. p. 105. The learned Dr. Bellamy says: "God the Father is never called the angel of God, but the God of Bethel is called the angel of God. Therefore the God of Bethel is not God the Father. The God of Bethel is the same who is called the angel of the covenant in Mal. 3 : 1; but that angel of the covenant is Christ, as is plain from Mark, 1 : 2, therefore the God of Bethel was Christ. The God of Bethel was the God who appeared to Abraham, Gen. 12 : 1–7; to Isaac, Gen. 26 : 24, 25; to Jacob, Gen. 28 : 13; 31 : 13; to Moses, Exod. 3 : 2–6; on Mount Sinai, Exod. 20 : 2; and is usually called the God and King of Israel through the Old Testament. But the God of Bethel was Jesus Christ, therefore Jesus

Christ was the God and King of Israel. If Jesus Christ was the God and King of Israel, then may St. Paul be justified in representing him as the Creator of the universe, Col. 1:16, and in applying to him in his epistles, what was evidently spoken of the God and King of Israel in the sacred writings of the Old Testament. Compare Ps 68:18 with Eph. 4:8, and Ps. 102:25 with Heb. 1:10. And our blessed Savior may be justified in laying down his life rather than give up his claim. And there was more truth in the title set up over his head when on the cross: 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews,' than his crucifiers were aware of; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." Works, fol. 1, p. 467, note. The pious and judicious E. Simpson says, "That the Son of God, before he took upon him human nature, did conduct all the divine dispensations, has been and now is the opinion of some of the most able and learned men of every denomination. I know of none among us who reject the sentiment, except the Deists and Socinians. The Arians and Orthodox are agreed on the subject. And as this opinion, if once fairly established, absolutely subverts the Socinian hypothesis, that Christ had no existence before he was born of the Virgin Mary, we will dwell a little on the subject, and notice such considerations as appear to us altogether conclusive.

"1. It has been the uniform opinion of men the most competent to judge, though on other subjects they widely differ from each other. 2. It appears from the internal marks of many of those dispensations recorded in Scripture. 3. From the application of many passages of the Old Testament to the Son of God, in the New, by the apostles who wrote under the direction and influence of the Holy Spirit; which passages can be applied to no merely created being whatever. 4. From the opinion of the most able and learned of the ancient Jewish writers, who usually

applied the appearance of God, both before and during their own dispensation, to the Logos. 5. From the uniform sense of the Christian Church, even in its best and purest ages. If we can establish these five propositions, it will be easily granted that Christ in his divine nature conducted all the dispensations of God from the beginning." p. 123.

I can assure you, my dear brother, that these propositions are so established and confirmed as it were upon a rock, that all the opposers of the divinity of the blessed Jesus will never be able to refute them, and I regret exceedingly that they are too long to be transcribed. I proceed therefore to show,

2dly, That Jesus Christ possesses all the Divine criteria.

§ 3. He is called God. It is granted that his name (God) is given to creatures, but it is apparent that in such cases it is either given in the plural number, (as to angels and magistrates,) or if used in the singular number, it is in such a particular sense, and under such circumstances and limitations, as plainly show it is applied only in a figurative sense; as when Moses is said to be a god to Aaron, that is, instead of God, and when he is said to be made a god to Pharaoh, Exod. 7 : 1, it is limited, and signifies no more than that he should represent God's authority in commanding, and exert his power in punishing Pharaoh. It is evident that Moses was not a god by nature, because he was a *made* god, which the true God is not; and he is said to be a god only to Pharaoh, whereas the true God "is over all, God blessed for ever." Magistrates must die, Ps. 82: 6, and angels are but ministering spirits. In like manner the devil is called the god of this world; here again is a limitation, but when ascribed to Jesus it is without limitation in any circumstances that should lead us to a figurative sense of the word; nay, on the contrary, it is used in such a manner as leads us to take the title in its true and proper sense. Hence, in accordance with the prediction,

Isa. 7 : 14, He was called Immanuel, i. e. God with us, Matt. 1 : 23, without any limitation.

§ 4. The apostle John says: "This is the true God and eternal life," and then adds, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen." Now it has been properly observed that it is very unlikely that the apostle should conclude his epistle with such a solemn charge against idolatry, and yet in the foregoing verse leave his expression concerning the true God so easily and so naturally to be interpreted concerning Jesus Christ, if he were not the true God. Again, he is called the mighty God, Isa. 9: 6. and the great God, Titus, 2 : 13; and you know, dear Benjamin, that this last expression is the distinguishing name of Jehovah. See Deut. 10 : 17; Jer. 32 : 18, 19.

Further, he is called the only wise God. Jude, v. 24, 25. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." That this doxology is ascribed to Jesus is evident from Eph. 5 : 25, 27; where he is said to present the church. Farther, this name is also ascribed to him, Rom. 16 : 27, and 1 Tim. 1 : 17. Again, Jesus Christ is called the only God, or God and none else; for Isa. 45 : 22–25, is applied to Jesus by the apostle, Rom. 14 : 10, 11; and yet this is the peculiar name of Jehovah, as appears from Deut. 4 : 35, 39; and Isa. 45 : 5. Again, the apostle calls him, Rom. 9 5, "God blessed for ever." Now I wish you, my dear Benjamin, to notice particularly that this description, God blessed for ever, is an incommunicable name of the true God, and is no where in Scripture given to any mere creature. The apostle gives it as a distinguishing character from all that are called gods, "who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen."

Rom. 1 : 25. And you know that it has ever been the custom of our people, when they speak of the true and living God, to add, "Blessed be he;" and sometimes, "for ever and ever. Amen."

Hence the question proposed by the high priest was, "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" and when Christ had answered it in the affirmative, the high priest rent his clothes (as an expression of mourning) and said, "What need we any further witnesses? ye have heard the blasphemy." Now, if the apostle had believed our Savior to be no more than a dignified creature, he could not have put a greater stumbling-block before our people, to harden them in their unbelief and prejudice against Christ, than by giving him a name and character which they had always appropriated to the great Jehovah.

§ 5. Jehovah, or Jehovah of hosts, is the next incommunicable name which is also ascribed to Jesus.

That this is the peculiar name of the true and living God, and never given to any mere intelligent being, has been proved before, and I will now show that it is ascribed to the Messiah in several places in the Old Testament, which are applied to him by the Rabbins, and which are quoted in the New Testament and applied to Jesus Christ.

The Lord of hosts, whom Isaiah, ch. 8 : 13, 14, foretold would be a sanctuary to some, and a stone of stumbling and rock of offence to others, good old Simeon and the apostle Peter apply to Jesus Christ, Luke, 2 : 34. 1 Pet. 2 : 7; and our own nation to the present day is an awful proof of its fulfillment.

The Lord of hosts, whom Isaiah saw seated on a throne, and who was worshiped by the seraphim and cherubim, we are assured by the evangelist John, was our blessed Jesus. Compare Isa. 6 : 1–10, with John, 12 : 40, 41.

Again, the Lord God, (Jehovah Elohim,) whose way was to be prepared in the wilderness, is Jesus Christ our

Lord, whose way was prepared by John the Baptist, as has been fully shown before, (see p. 272.)

The title King of glory, which is Jehovah of hosts in Psalm 24, is ascribed to Jesus Christ by the apostle, 1 Cor. 2:8; and in the Revelation of St. John, 17: 14; and 19: 16, Christ is called King of kings and Lord of lords. Now, if Christ was not the Lord of glory before his crucifixion, the force of the apostle's argument with the church at Corinth, in the forecited passage, vanishes, and the application of that title is unbecoming, for Jehovah claims it as his own. Deut. 10: 17; Psa. 136: 2, 3.

§ 6. In the following passage we have a glorious description of the triumph of Jehovah: "He rides upon the heavens by his name Jah. The earth shook, the heavens dropped at the presence of God, the God of Israel. The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels. The Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place. Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men." Psa. 68: 4, 8, 17, 18. Now this passage is applied to the ascension of Christ into heaven; Eph. 4: 8, 10. Christ is, therefore, this Lord, this God, this Jehovah or Jah, whose triumph is there described. To these passages I might add, Jer. 23: 5, 6; 33: 15, 16, compared with 1 Cor. 1: 30; Zech. 11: 12, compared with Matt. 27: 9, 10, &c. &c.; but I close this paragraph by observing, that since the title of Jehovah, or Jehovah of hosts, is a principal mark of distinction by which the true God was pleased to manifest himself, and to set forth his own superior excellency in opposition to all pretended deities; and since the writers of the New Testament have assured us that Christ is Jehovah, or Lord of hosts, and consequently possessed of all those distinguishing powers and perfections which go along with that title, the consequence is evident and undeniable, that they considered Christ to be God in the true, strict, and proper

sense, eternal and immutable, of the same power, nature, and perfections with God the Father.

§ 7. It is proper to observe in this place, that the writers of the New Testament frequently quote passages from the Old, either in proof of their doctrine, or to show that the predictions of prophets are fulfilled. Whenever this is their point in view, the passages they quote from the Old Testament must, in their literal sense, signify what they are alledged to signify. It is inexcusable in interpreters of sacred Scripture to pretend "that the apostles cite the authority of the Old Testament in the Jewish way of draw ing conclusions, which in sound logic would have been rejected." If they were under the influence of the Spirit of God, we cannot suppose their writings to contain any false reasoning, however common it might have been among their countrymen to argue absurdly. To say that Christ and his apostles applied quotations merely by way of accommodation, is most ridiculous and profane. The following quotation is from the learned Bishop Sherlock: "Our blessed Savior," says he, "claims to himself that awful name, *I Am*, which belongs to the Supreme Being. Before Abraham was, I Am. Had our Savior only said, before Abraham was, I *was*, thus much at least would have been the consequence, that he had an existence before Abraham; but, now that he says, before Abraham was, I *am*, something more is implied, something that peculiarly belongs to the expression I am; and what that is, we may learn from the original use of the words. They are the words which God made choice of to express his own eternity and power. When Moses inquired after the name of God, he answered him, 'I am that I am. Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I Am has sent me unto you.' Exod. 3 : 14. What now could tempt our Savior to use and apply this expression to himself? He knew that it had never been applied to any but God, and

would have been, in the man so applying it, in the highest degree to commit the robbery of making himself equal with God." Disc. 1, fo. 4.

It is evident, from the context, that the Jews understood our Savior as asserting his own divinity, for they immediately took up stones to stone him for blasphemy; and Christ, instead of making the smallest apology for what he had said, or attempting in the least to explain himself in any other sense, exerted his supernatural power and escaped out of their hands, leaving them in full possession of the opinion they had formed concerning him.

§ 8. I pass on to the next title ascribed to the Messiah in the Old Testament, and applied to Jesus Christ in the New, which is that of the "First and the Last." Isa. 44 : 6; 48 : 12, compared with Rev. 1 : 8, 11; 2 : 8. In the first of these passages, viz. 1 : 8, the Lord Jesus Christ is called Jehovah, or what is equivalent, He that was, is, and is to come; and the incommunicable attributes of omnipotence and eternity are ascribed to him.

§ 9. I will close this part of our subject by noticing the title of the "Son of God," by which Jesus Christ is so frequently called.

We have already seen that the Messiah was expected to be the Son of God. Psa. 2 : 7; 89 : 26, 27. Isa. 9 : 6. As the expression "Son of man" refers to and expresses the reality of his human nature, so the phrase "Son of God" refers to and expresses the reality of his divine nature. On two different occasions Peter confessed him to be the Son of God, where it is evident he must have reference to his divinity. The first is recorded, John, 6 : 69, and the second in Matthew, 16 : 17. They read thus: "We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." Again, "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-

jona, for flesh and blood has not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Now these confessions consist of two parts, viz. that Jesus is the Christ, and the Son of God. With respect to the first, Peter declares his conviction that Jesus was the illustrious person pointed out by the prophets, as the Lord's anointed to the work of salvation; and with this he subjoins his other character as the Son of God, because no one was to be the anointed of Jehovah but he to whom he had said, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Psa. 2 : 7, Now, as he is denominated *that Christ*, to distinguish him from all the anointed prophets; so he is denominated *that Son*, to distinguish him from believers, who are sons by regeneration and adoption; from all the Jews, who, because of their lawful descent from Abraham, said that God was their Father, John, 8 : 41, and to whom, in a natural respect, belongs the adoption; and from angels, who by creation are the sons of God. Now, if these expressions, viz. thou art that Christ, and the Son of the living God, were synonymous, and meant no more than that Jesus is the Messiah, then the apostle's confession would have been no more than that which the carnal Jews had frequently made, John, 6 : 14, 15, and would therefore by force make him a king; but when Christ asserted his divinity, they were offended, and forsook him; which led to the confession of Peter. Besides, it is evident, from our Lord's observation, that Peter's confession referred to his divinity, and not to his office as Messiah. The miracles which Jesus wrought were sufficient evidence to convince the carnal Jew that he was the Messiah; but that he was the Son of God, was revealed to Peter by the Father. For you know, my dear Benjamin, that nothing is more frequent with our Rabbins than the phrase flesh and blood, as denoting men in distinction from God. Hence they say "the first man was the work of the blessed God, and not the work of flesh and

blood." Zohar. Gen. fo. 43. c. 3. Hence the sense is, that Peter had not received this knowledge from men, but from God. The doctrine of the deity of Christ is of pure revelation. That there is a God, is discoverable by the light of nature; but that he has a Son of the same nature with himself, and equal to him, which is the Messiah, the Savior of lost sinners, could never have been found out by flesh and blood; "for no man knoweth the Son but the Father, and he to whom he reveals him." Matt. 11 : 27. Happy are they who are blessed with the outward revelation of Jesus Christ in the Gospel, but more blessed they to whom the Father reveals Christ in them the hope of glory.

Farewell.

Letter II.

DIVINE CRITERIA ASCRIBED TO JESUS.

Dear Benjamin,

Having shown that the incommunicable names and titles of Deity are applied to Jesus Christ,

§ 1. I proceed to show that the incommunicable attributes of Jehovah are also ascribed to him. As he who wants one of these attributes cannot be God; for God is infinitely perfect; so he who possesses but one infinite perfection, must possess all the rest; for none but a true God is infinite. Now, of Christ it is said, that "in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Col. 2 : 9.

Eternity is an incommunicable perfection of Jehovah.

Psa. 90 : 2, and is ascribed to the Messiah by the prophet Micah, 5 : 2; and to Jesus Christ, Matt. 2 : 6. Christ was not only before Abraham, but long before Adam; for his goings forth have been *Meolamim*, i. e. before time commenced. Micah, 5 : 2. Hence he is called the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the Ending.

Immutability is another divine criterion, Psa. 102 : 25–27, and is applied to Jesus Christ, Heb. 1 : 10–12. 13 : 8.

Omnipresence, which is the peculiar property of Deity, is claimed by Jesus Christ himself; who declared that he was in heaven at the same time whilst he was on the earth conversing with Nicodemus, John, 3 : 13; and he promised his presence wherever two or three are met in his name, Matt. 18 : 20, and wherever his Gospel is preached.

This was the great encouraging promise of Jehovah, under the Old Testament. See Deut. 23 : 14. Joshua, 2 : 4, 5. Isa. 12 : 6. 58 : 9. Jer. 14 : 9. Joel, 2 : 27. Haggai, 1 : 13. Zeph. 3 : 16.

Omniscience is another attribute of Deity. The knowledge of men's thoughts is a divine prerogative. This knowledge God expressly claims as his own. Isa. 66 : 18. "I know the heart." Nay with this he puts all creatures to defiance. Jer. 17 : 9, 10. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruits of his doings." The faith of the saints under the Old Testament corresponded with such declarations; hence David assigns this work to God, saying, "Shall not God search this out? for he knows the secrets of the heart." Psa. 44 : 21. Again he says, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts." Psa. 139 : 23. And Solomon says, "Then

hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and do, and give unto every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest; for thou, even thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men." 1 Kings, 8 : 39. Now the evangelists ascribe to our Savior the knowledge of the thoughts of men. Matt. 9 : 4. 12 : 25. Luke, 5 : 22. 6 : 8. 9 : 47. 11 : 47. And Jesus Christ himself claims this knowledge, saying, "All the churches shall know that I am he which searches the reins and hearts." Rev. 2 : 23. Besides, he hears and answers the prayers of his people, John, 14 : 13, 14, which requires the attribute of omniscience.

Almighty power is also one of the divine criteria, and is claimed by Jesus Christ. To raise the dead requires almighty power; but Jesus said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." John, 2 : 19. Acts, 2 : 24, compared with John, 10 : 18. Again he says, "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again." From these passages it clearly appears that Jesus Christ had an actual existence and possessed almighty power at the very time his body was lying lifeless in the grave. Jesus Christ also possesses almighty power to raise others from the dead; for he can, by his commanding voice, cause the dead to hear and rise out of their graves. John, 5 : 21, 25, 28. And accordingly this raising of the dead, and changing of our vile body, to fashion it like to his glorious body, are by the Apostle Paul said to be effected "according to the working of his mighty power, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself," Phil. 3 : 21—expressions which import his power to be absolute and irresistible. But this divine power will appear more clearly as we proceed to consider,

§ 2. The works peculiar to Deity are ascribed to Jesus Christ also; for Jesus said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work; what things soever he doeth, these also doeth

the Son likewise." John, 5 : 17, 19. The creation of the world is the exclusive work of Jehovah, as has been shown before. But the creation of the universe is the work of Jesus Christ. Compare Psa. 102 : 25–27, with Heb. 1 : 10–12; read also carefully, John, 1 : 2, 3, 14. Col. 1 : 16, 17. On this subject Saint Austin reasons thus: "Christ, by whom all things were made, cannot be made himself; and if Christ be not made, then he is not a creature; but if he be not a creature, then he must be of the same substance with the Father; for all substance or being which is not God, is necessarily a creature, and what a creature is not, that God is. Now, if the Son is not of the same substance of which the Father is, he must necessarily be a created substance, and if he be a created substance, then all things could not be made by him; but all things were made by him, therefore he is of the same substance with the Father, and consequently is not only God, but the true God." De Trinit. fo. 1.

That Christ was not a *mere instrument* which God used in the work of creation, is plain from this, that the Scriptures not only teach that Christ was the very supreme God himself that created all things, Psa. 102 : 25. Heb. 1 : 10, but also that no instrument was used in that work. It was wrought immediately by God *himself;* as it is written, "God *himself* formed the earth, and made it." Isa. 44 : 22. 45 : 18.

The preservation and government of all things is as much the work of God as their first creation. But Christ is said to uphold all things by the word of his power, Heb. 1 : 3, and therefore he must be truly God.

The miracles of Jesus Christ, which have been considered, in a former letter, as a proof of his Messiahship, might be considered also as a proof of his true divinity. But I proceed to consider,

§ 3. The work of redemption, which is the peculiar

work of Jehovah, but is every where ascribed to Jesus Christ, and therefore is a clear demonstration of his divinity. To magnify the law of God, and to make it honorable; to atone for our sins, and deliver us from the wrath to come; to redeem us from the curse of the law, and free us from the tyranny of sin and Satan, the fear of death, and the misery of hell; to restore us to the lost favor of God, to the acceptance of our person and services, and to a title to, and fitness for, eternal life; to accomplish all this, and much more, included in the work of redemption, required not only that the Redeemer should be partaker of flesh and blood, to be our *Goel*, i. e. kinsman and brother, but he must also be equal with God, the offended party, as has been shown in a former letter. Besides, the act of forgiving sin is the prerogative of God. Isa. 43 : 25. But Jesus Christ forgave sins whilst on earth, Mark, 2 : 5–12, and "him has God exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Acts, 5 : 31. And to him the Martyr Stephen prayed, saying, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Acts, 2 : 60.

§ 4. To raise the dead is another work peculiar to God only; but Jesus Christ declared that he could raise himself from the dead, as has been shown before; and by his voice and almighty power all the dead will be raised and brought to judgment, and the proceedings of that awful day will prove, beyond all contradiction, the true and proper divinity of Jesus Christ. John, 5 : 28, 29. 1 Thess. 4 : 16, 17. For, my dear Benjamin, how can we suppose a being destitute of the divine perfections capable of such a work? It certainly requires an omniscient mind and an almighty arm to manifest the secrets of all hearts, and to discover and punish the infinite variety of secret wickedness in the heart of man, as well as proclaim and reward the secret workings of piety in those that have loved God,

§ 5. I proceed now to show that divine worship which is due to Jehovah only, is also applied to Jesus Christ. I have already proved, both from reason and Scripture, that religious worship belongs to the true and living God only; if, therefore, it can be proved that Jesus Christ both required and received such worship, it will follow that he possesses real and proper divinity in common with his eternal Father; or else it will follow that Christ himself was guilty of blasphemy, and all the apostles and first Christians robbed God of his incommunicable honor, and were guilty of idolatry. That Jesus Christ did require and receive such worship, is abundantly evident from the Gospels, the Epistles, and the Revelation of St. John, and from the testimony of the fathers in the Christian church. The Lord Jesus Christ himself has told us that it is the will of the Father that all men should honor the Son as they do the Father." John, 5 : 23. Calling on the name of the Lord is considered divine worship, Joel, 2 : 32. Isa. 28 : 11, and it is ascribed to Jesus Christ as the object of that worship. Rom. 10 : 11–15. This calling on the name of the Lord is made the character of the saints. 1 Cor. 1 : 12. Acts, 9 : 14, 21. Further, we are to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as we believe in God. John, 14 : 1: We are to love him supremely, more than father or mother, &c. Mark, 10 : 37. Luke, 14 : 26. Now, if the love here demanded be not supreme, it is impossible to find any other that can come under this description. It implies all that God claims in the first commandment. Matt. 22 : 37, 38. Christ also requires unreserved subjection, Matt. 11 : 29. Col. 3 : 24, and devotedness to him. 2 Cor. 5 : 14. Matt. 28 : 19.

Again, praise and thanksgiving due unto God are ascribed equally unto Christ. The doxologies are addressed to Christ as well as to the Father. 1 Tim. 1 : 17. 6 : 16. 1 Peter, 3 : 11. 4 : 11. 5 : 10, 11. Rev. 1 : 5. 5 : 13. 7 :

10. Again, prayer and supplication are made to Christ as well as to the Father. Rom. 1 : 7. 16 : 24. 1 Cor. 1 : 3. 16 : 23. The Apostle Paul prayed three times to Christ. 2 Cor. 12 : 8, 9. Stephen also directed his prayer to Jesus. Acts, 7 : 59, 60. See also 1 Thess. 3 : 11, 12. 2 Thess. 2 : 16, 17. Rev. 22 : 17, 20, 21.

§ 6. "If Christ is only a man," says Novatian, "how is he every where present to those who call upon him? since this is not the nature of man, but of God. If Christ is only a man, why does man invoke him in prayer as Mediator? since the invocation of a man must be considered as ineffectual to the accomplishing of deliverance and salvation. If Christ is nothing more than a mere man, why is our hope and trust put in him? seeing cursed is the hope that is placed in man." De Trinit. ch. 14. If Christ be not God, then to worship him would be idolatry. If to worship Christ is idolatry, then Paul, it must be acknowledged, was provided by Jesus Christ himself with a very bad spiritual director; for Ananias undoubtedly exhorted him to worship Christ, saying, "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Acts, 22 : 16. If Paul had considered Jesus as a mere man, would he have believed that he could make him an instrument in enlightening the understandings and changing the heart of sinners, and of delivering them from the power of Satan? Would he believe that Jesus could give them pardon and glory; that he was the object of faith; and that faith in him could be the means of sanctification? Would he confide in him for deliverance from the heathen, or even submit to receive a commission from him? Immediately after his conversion, he testified his full conviction of the divinity of Christ. Acts, 9 : 20.

§ 7. Let it be further noticed, that Christ received divine worship without any check or reproof. Matt. 23 : 17. Luke, 24 : 52. John, 20 : 28. Not so with Peter, Paul,

and Barnabas, and the angel; they all forbid such worship to be given to them. Acts, 10 : 25, 26. 14 : 14, 15. Rev. 19 : 10. 22 : 9. Now, as nothing less than God can be the proper object of our adorations, therefore when Christ assures us that he will present all our supplications, and that he will perform our petitions, he encourages and directs us to address our prayers to him, as well as to the Father; and thereby declares himself God as unequivocally as by any appellation the most expressive of divinity.

§ 8. Further, upon supposition that Christ was no more than a mere good man, exalted by the pleasure of the Father, the sacred Scriptures abound with strange, unguarded language. There is an indecency and impropriety, an unsuitableness in such representations; for they are calculated to mislead and deceive. It has justly been observed, that neither Moses nor the prophets exhibited their testimony as the foundation of faith; they always referred to divine authority, prefacing their declarations with a "Thus saith the Lord." But Jesus speaks in his own name; and requires faith in his testimony, on the ground of his own authority. John, 4 : 41. 14 : 11. Thus, true faith fixes on the very name of the Son of God as every way worthy to be its proper object: it is subjection of the whole soul to him; a captivity of every thought to the obedience of Christ, 2 Cor. 10 : 5; a submission of our will to his, Psa. 45 : 5. 110 : 3; an acknowledgment of his sovereign authority over the conscience, Matt. 28 : 20, and a recognition of his right to supreme affections. Luke, 14 : 26. Faith is a fleeing for refuge to him as the hope set before us, Heb. 6 : 8; a firm persuasion of his ability to save to the uttermost. Heb. 7 : 25. It is a resting of the soul on him, Matt. 11 : 28, 29, and an unbounded confidence in him. Matt. 12 : 21. Eph. 1 : 12, 13. Faith respects Jesus as its author and finisher, Heb. 12 : 1; as the very spring and support of spiritual life, Gal.

2 : 20; and as the giver of eternal life. John, 10 : 28. It is a commitment of the soul to him. Acts, 17 : 59. And this cannot be in well-doing, unless he be a faithful Creator. 1 Peter, 4 : 19. In a word, it is a surrender of the whole person to him as his property, and a constant proposal of his glory as the supreme end, whether in life or in death. 2 Cor. 8 : 5. Rom. 14 : 8. Philippians, 1 : 20. Let any man in his senses judge if there be a creature, either in heaven or on earth, worthy of such faith and worship.

§ 9. Besides, the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, of which Christ is the author, and in which he is the object of divine worship, prove him to be the true and living God. In baptism we solemnly dedicate our faith, worship and service to the Son, as well as to the Father and the Holy Ghost.

If there were no other foundation for the doctrine of the Holy Trinity in unity than the command of our Lord and Savior in this ordinance, what higher authority or sanction could we have for believing and obeying it? "Go," says he, "and teach all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Jesus Christ uttered these words after his resurrection from the grave, and his victory over death and hell. He is the eternal Amen; he cannot err. He spoke to poor, illiterate men, who knew there was but one God, and who naturally had an extreme abhorrence for any thing which has the least show of weakening this great truth. Yet these very men are commanded to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Here mention is clearly made of three different persons. It is evident he does not enjoin baptism in the name of any quality or virtue; nor does he wish to confound the creature with the Creator, but rather to establish a perfect equality among the three; for he invariably

taught the unity of God. Consequently it is manifest that God, in whose name alone it is lawful to administer baptism, is the same one Supreme who is distinguished under three characters or persons—of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. We cannot reject, therefore, this doctrine so plainly taught by Jesus Christ, under pretence that, if we receive it, we admit three gods, without impeaching Wisdom himself. Prov. 8 : 22–31.

§ 10. The Lord's Supper is designed to honor our blessed Savior, by a grateful commemoration of his dying love; by the exercise of a lively faith in him; by a renewed dedication of ourselves to him, as our Lord and Savior; and by a public ascription of endless glory and dominion.

§ 11. The importance of the subject, I hope, my dear Benjamin, will be a sufficient apology for having detained you so long; and I will now close this letter with the sentiment of the pious Bishop Horne, "What shall we then say to these things? What can we say? but that He, to the invocation of whose name salvation is promised; He whose name his disciples, before they were called Christians, invoked, and were known to be his disciples by so doing; He, in whose name the apostles were accustomed to give their benedictions, and concerning whom St. John says, that whatever we ask of him, according to his will, we shall have the petitions we desire of him; He, who was worshiped by men on earth, without reproving them for it, and to whom in heaven all the angelic hosts, with the spirits of the redeemed, and the whole creation of God, give glory and honor; He, whom the church universal professed, from the beginning, to adore, and into whose hands the dying martyrs, from Stephen downward, committed their departing spirits; He, to whose service and worship, with that of the Father and the Holy Ghost, every Christian is dedicated in baptism; that this person is indeed what St. Paul certainly styles him, God over all,

blessed for ever, Rom. 9 : 5, and that we all may, and ought to use the words of St. Thomas: "My Lord and my God." John, 20 : 28. fo. 5, disc. 34.

Farewell

When first the God of boundless grace
Disclos'd his kind design,
To rescue our apostate race
From mis'ry, shame, and sin;

Quick through the realms of light and bliss
The joyful tidings ran;
Each heart exulted at the news,
That God would dwell with man.

Yet, 'midst their joys, they paus'd awhile,
And ask'd with strange surprise,
"But how can injur'd justice smile,
"Or look with pitying eyes?"

The Son of God attentive heard,
And quickly thus replied,
"In me let mercy be rever'd,
"And justice satisfied.

"Behold! my vital blood I pour
"A sacrifice to God;
"Let angry justice now no more
"Demand the sinner's blood."

He spake, and heaven's high arches rung
With shouts of loud applause;
"He died!" the friendly angels sung,
Nor ceas'd their rapt'rous joys.

PART IV.

IMPORTANCE OF THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

Letter I.

CONSEQUENCES IF HE IS NOT GOD.

My Dear Benjamin,

I have endeavored, in several preceding letters, to prove the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ; and cannot but hope that the variety of proofs produced will remove all doubts from your mind. For, however great and sincere your profession may be, that Jesus is the Christ, that is, the promised Messiah, and even the most exalted creature, yet, unless you believe him to be Jehovah, equal with the Father, you still labor under a most fatal error, fraught with the most dangerous consequences. I know there are not a few who consider this subject a matter of no importance; but I consider the divinity of Christ a scripture truth as much as the divinity of the Father, as has been fully shown, and the one is no more a "metaphysical speculation" than the other. Besides, it is exceedingly improper and absurd to call the principles pure speculations, which are of so great importance for the regulating our worship, that we can neither omit to worship Christ, if they are true, without the greatest impiety, nor perform it, if they are false, without being guilty of idolatry.

Let me therefore invite your most serious and patient attention, whilst I shall point out the important consequen-

ces that must inevitably follow, on the one hand, if Christ be not truly God, and on the other hand, if he be truly God.

First, If Christ be *not truly* God, then it follows,

§ 1. That he was not the promised Messiah, but a deceiver and a blasphemer. We have formerly proved, both from the Scriptures and from the writings of our most ancient Rabbins, that the Messiah was expected to be truly God; therefore, if Christ be not truly God and equal with the Father, he does not answer the character of the Messiah, and consequently was a deceiver; for he repeatedly declared that he was the Christ, the Messiah, of whom it was written in the law, in the prophets, and in the book of Psalms. Further, he would have been guilty of blasphemy, as well as of deception; for he not only claimed to be the Christ, but repeatedly declared that he was equal with God.

Let me call your attention to the following passage: "Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work: therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he had not only broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God. Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that himself doeth; and he will show him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father which hath sent him." John, 5 : 17–23. Now these words contain our Lord's

vindication of his own conduct when accused by our people of having violated the Sabbath, because he had performed a miraculous cure on that day. His vindication, however, was so little to their satisfaction, that they accused him still further, of making himself equal with God. Our Savior then goes on to explain, but without making the least concession of his simple humanity. He claims God for his own proper Father—assumes a right of operating on the Sabbath—a power of imitating God in his works of providence—of quickening whomsoever he will—the privilege and power of judging the world, and of being honored like as his heavenly Father is honored. That these are the pretensions of Jesus, is evident from the whole context; and that they are inconsistent with every idea we can entertain of mere created excellence, must be evident to the judgment of every impartial inquirer into the truth as it is in Jesus. He is either the true, proper, natural Son of God; or it is impossible to vindicate him from the most insolent and consummate imposture. There is no medium, (I speak it with reverence,) he must either be the real and genuine Son of God, or a most daring blasphemer.

§ 2. On another occasion, recorded John, 10 : 23–39, Christ was again charged with blasphemy in making himself equal with God. To justify his claim, he quotes the Old Testament to illustrate his meaning; but, so far from being satisfied, they were proceeding to seize him, when he escaped out of their hands. Now, if he had been a mere man, according to his external appearance, he had nothing to do but to tell them so, and all would have been easy. But as he used such expressions as led them to think that he pretended to be equal with God, he either was so in reality, or, to say the least, he dealt very disingenuously with them. He was to blame; they were to be pitied.

§ 3. From Matt. 26 : 63–66, it is very evident that Christ

was charged of being guilty of blasphemy, for making himself equal with God, for saying he was the Son of the most Blessed: and for this, and this only, did they think themselves justified in condemning him to death. The Jews certainly understood that our Lord meant to assert that he is equal with God. They either were right in their conclusion or not. If the former, then Christ is equal with God, as we believe him to be; if the latter be the case, viz. that they were mistaken, then it certainly would have been the duty of Christ to rectify their mistake. He doubtless knew in what sense he used the appellation which he assumed, and by his acquiescence admitted the truth of their allegation. If they had misunderstood his pretensions, he had many opportunities of undeceiving them, both to prevent his death and the propagation of an error which his acquiescence and their charge did not fail to establish. Yet, instead of correcting their opinions, he confirmed the charge by repeating his assertion, and submitting to the sentence which the Levitical law passed on him for calling himself the Son of God. Therefore if we admit, in any degree, the truth of the Christian revelation, and believe that Christ came into the world to bear witness unto the truth, we must believe him to have been what he professed himself to be, viz. the Son of God in the literal sense of the sentences which his living witnesses imputed to them, i. e. God—equal with God—and one with God.

§ 4. Besides, I have already shown, in the preceding letter, that Christ both required and received divine worship; and in the first and second chapters of the Revelation of St. John, Christ assumes to himself the divine criteria of eternity, immutability, omniscience, omnipotence, and absolute control of the universe—killing and making alive at his pleasure. Such language ill becomes a mere creature, and is nothing less than blasphemy; and equally unbecoming would be the language with which he closes the sacred

volume of divine revelation, chap. 22 : 12, 13, 16, compared with Numb. 24 : 17 ; Mal. 4 : 2.

§ 5. If Jesus Christ was not God, and consequently was guilty of blasphemy, then the Jews, in putting him to death, only executed that punishment which God himself had commanded them : for the law expressly required that a blasphemer should be put to death, Lev. 24 : 15, 16. Hence, when Pilate declared that he could find no fault in Jesus worthy of death, the high priest said, "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God." John, 19 : 7. The accusation, then, was blasphemy, for calling himself the Son of God in the strictest sense of the word. Pilate, therefore, when he heard that Jesus was the Son of God, was the more afraid, and asked "Whence art thou?" that is, art thou indeed a divine person? of what deity hast thou descended? for Pilate could not have had a reference to his natural descent or native place, for he was well acquainted with both. Now if Jesus was condemned and put to death according to God's law, the inspired apostle would not have charged the Jews with having crucified the Lord of glory, and with having done it with wicked hands. Nor could they have blamed them for not believing in a deceiver and a blasphemer. And surely a holy, just, and righteous God would never have poured out his wrath upon them to the uttermost, which we are assured he has done. 1 Thes. 2 : 16. Besides, I have shown already in a former letter, (p. 296,) that the unparalleled sufferings of our nation, since the death of Christ to the present day, could be accounted for upon no other principle except their rejection of Jesus of Nazareth, the true Messiah.

§ 6. If Christ was not truly God, then it follows he was not the promised Messiah, and consequently the ceremonial law is not abrogated, and no atonement is made for sin. The Mosaic dispensation was to continue until the

coming of the Messiah, who was to give a new law, as is acknowledged by our Rabbins. The types were to continue until the coming of the anti-type. The shadows were to remain until the coming of the substance. Sacrifices, which were the very soul of the Mosaic ceremonies, were not to cease until after the death of the Messiah: but sacrifices have ceased; the veil of the temple is rent from the top to the bottom, to show that the way unto the most holy place is opened for all, and the distinction between the carnal priests, Levites, Israelites, Gentiles, and women, is for ever done away, "for in Christ Jesus there is no difference." Rom. 10:12; Gal. 3:28.

Further, if Christ was not God, then he could not make an atonement for sin. "There are two things," says Dr. Owen, "concerning the Messiah, which are the pillars and foundation of the Church. The one is his divine nature; and the other, his work of mediation in the atonement for sin, which he was to make by his sufferings, or the sacrifice of himself." Now, if the foundation is removed, the pillars must fall. The blood of a mere human creature could no more atone for the sins of men than the blood of bulls and goats. "The divinity of Jesus Christ," says the pious Dr. Hawker, "I conceive to be the chief corner-stone in the edifice of Christianity. Remove this from the building, and the whole fabric immediately totters. The foundation is shaken to the very centre. There appears at once an evident disproportion between the end and the means, the importance of the object proposed, and the person by whom it was accomplished." Serm. Div. of Christ, p. 8.

But instead of enlarging on this subject, I will refer my dear Benjamin to what I have said on the priestly office of the Messiah, and simply observe, that if Jesus Christ is not as truly God as he is man, then the law of God is not yet magnified and made honorable; divine justice is not satisfied; and God cannot be a just God, and yet the justifier of

them that believe in Christ;—then the Gospel is a deception, our preaching is vain, our hope is vain, and we are yet in our sins; yea, we are of all men the most miserable. And remember, my dear Benjamin, that if we go about to establish our own righteousness, as our people attempted to do, then, like them, we shall surely stumble and fall; for by the deeds of the law no flesh living can be justified.

§ 7. I still remember a sermon preached in London in 1802, at the Missionary meeting, by the late Dr. John Mason, in which he said, "The doctrine of our Lord's divinity is not, as a fact, more interesting to our faith, than, as a principle, it is essential to our hope. If he were not 'the true God,' he would not be 'eternal life.' When, pressed down by guilt and languishing for happiness, I look around for a deliverer, such as my conscience and my heart and the word of God assure me I need, insult not my agony by directing me to a creature—to a man—a mere man like myself! a creature—a man! My Redeemer owns my person. My immortal spirit is his property. When I come to die, I must commit it into his hands. My soul, my infinitely precious soul committed to a mere man! become the property of a mere man! I would not thus intrust my body to the highest angel who burns in the temple above. It is only the 'Father of spirits' that can have property in spirits, and be their refuge in the hour of transition from the present to the approaching world. In short, my brethren, the divinity of Jesus is, in the system of grace, the sun, to which all its parts are subordinate, and all their stations refer—which binds them in sacred concord, and imparts to them their radiance, and life, and vigor. Take from it this central luminary, and the glory is departed—its holy harmonies are broken—the elements rush to chaos—the light of salvation is extinguished for ever!"

§ 8. If Christ be not the true and living God, then again

it follows that many of the most learned Christians in former ages, as well as at the present day, are guilty of idolatry for believing the divinity of Christ. Dr. Grotius says, "There were always very many amongst the worshipers of Christ who were men of good judgment and of no small learning; such as (not to mention Jews) Sergius, the president of Cyprus, Dionysius the Areopagite, Origen, Tertullian, Clemens Alexandrinus, Justin, Polycarp, Irenaeus, Athenagoras, and others." De. Verit. Christ. B. 2, sec. 3.

"Socinus himself acknowledges, that from the infancy of the church there had been very many pious learned men, martyrs too, who had embraced this grievous error; viz. that Jesus Christ is that one God who created all things, or certainly begotten of his proper substance." Epist. 3. ratecius.

Ignatius, bishop of Antioch at the close of the first century, suffered martyrdom. He begins one of his epistles in the following manner: "I glorify Jesus Christ our God, who has given unto you this wisdom." Epist. ad Smyr. Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, who suffered in the year one hundred and sixty-seven, joins God the Father and the Son together in his prayers for grace and benediction upon man; "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and Christ himself, the eternal High Priest, the Son of God, build you up in faith and truth—and to all them that are under heaven, that shall believe in Jesus Christ our Lord, and in his Father, who raised him from the dead." Epist. at. Phil. sec. 12. And when he was brought to the stake, he concluded his last prayer with this doxology to the blessed Trinity: "I bless thee, I praise thee, I glorify thee for all things, together with the eternal and heavenly Jesus Christ, thy beloved Son, with whom, unto thee and the Holy Spirit, be glory both now and for ever, world without end." Polycarp. apud Coteler. Patres Apostol. T. 2, p. 189.

Justin Martyr, who lived about the middle of the second

century, declared to the Pagans, that the object of divine worship was the whole Trinity. "We worship and we admire," says he, "the God of righteousness, and his Son, and the Holy Spirit of prophecy." Yet a little after he tells the emperor, "We hold it unlawful to worship any but God alone." Justin, Apol. 2.

Origen, who lived in the former part of the third century, says, "We worship and we adore no creature but the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." Comment. in Epist. ad Rom. lib. 1. Now could such men as these be mistaken in the capital article of the Christian religion and object of divine worship? Impossible. If they had considered Jesus as any thing less than the true God, how would they have answered the heathens, when charged that they worshiped a man that had been crucified? They did not deny that fact, and yet declared that they worshiped God alone. By this practice, therefore, they showed their belief of Christ's true divinity. They worshiped him only upon the ground that he is one with God the Father and the Holy Spirit; and had they done it upon any other supposition, they would have been guilty of idolatry by their own confession.

§ 9. If these wise and pious men had been idolaters, because they believed Christ to be the true and living God, and therefore worshiped him as such, then they were led into this fatal error by simply believing the scripture account of Christ; but who can believe that the Scriptures, both the Old and the New Testament, whose chief end is to deliver men from idolatry, and to bring them back to the knowledge, service, and enjoyment of Jehovah—a revelation which was propagated by men the most exemplary for piety and uprightness, and which has produced effects the most blessed and glorious, should lead men into such fatal and abominable errors? Whilst the volume of nature, ransacked by the most energetic powers of reason, cannot afford the least information relative to the character of the

Messiah, the sacred Scriptures describe him in the clearest and fullest manner possible, as the true and living God. We have already seen that they attribute to him all the divine criteria; and I will, in my next letter, select but a few plain scriptures on the subject. Farewell.

Letter II.

THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

Beloved Benjamin,

I will now invite your attention to a few select scriptures, to show to what fatal errors they lead, if Christ be not God.

§ 1. Our blessed Lord, in his solemn prayer just before his death, says, "Now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." John, 17: 6. "Were there no intimation," says Dr. Harwood, "in the whole New Testament of the pre-existence of Christ, this single passage would irrefragably demonstrate and establish it. Our Savior here, in a solemn act of devotion, declares to the Almighty that he had glory with him before the world was; and fervently supplicates that he would be graciously pleased to reinstate him in his former felicity. The language is plain and clear. Every word has great moment and emphasis. Upon this single text I lay my finger. Here I rest my system." Of the Socinian Scheme, p. 47.

§ 2. The next passage is that in 2 Cor. 8: 9. "Ye

know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be made rich." Now, my dear Benjamin, if Christ was not the true and living God, but a mere creature, with what propriety can this be said of our Lord? When and where was our Savior rich in this world? His whole history contradicts this assertion. On the contrary, he was so poor that he was obliged to work a miracle to satisfy the demands of some tax-gatherers. He lived solely on the benevolence of his friends: he had no place where to lay his head. But upon the hypothesis that our Lord enjoyed the most exalted station before his incarnation, every thing is consistent and natural. In his pre-existent state, he was rich in glory, honor, and happiness, with a greatness and benevolence of soul that can never be sufficiently exalted. He abdicated all this and became poor, that we, through his poverty, might become rich. The apostle's argument, to excite the liberality and benevolence of the Corinthians, from this stupendous act and instance of our Lord's condescension and benevolence, upon this scheme only, is cogent and apposite, and very elegant and persuasive. "This passage is, in my opinion," says Dr. Hawker, "no inconsiderable argument to prove that the earliest Christians, and in the days of the apostles themselves, were not unbelievers in our Lord's divinity, but orthodox in the great article of our faith; for the apostle writes to the Corinthians with all the confidence of one who was mentioning, not a novel thing, but a truth long since received and acknowledged. For had this point been at all questionable, or not fully credited, he surely would not have said "*ye know*" what they absolutely did not know, had never heard of before, or perhaps denied. A presumptive evidence at least is this, that the Corinthians were believers in this important doctrine. It is impossible to reconcile the apostle's expression in this passage, even

with common sense, upon any other terms than the supposition that he was writing to a body of men who were believers in the divinity of Christ." Serm. p. 55.

§ 3. Further: the apostle, in writing to the Galatians, begins his epistle thus: "Paul, an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead." Now, if Paul did receive his apostleship neither of man, nor by man, but by Jesus Christ, then Jesus Christ must be superior to man and equal with the Father.

§ 4. Again, in chap. 4: 4, 5, he says, "When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Now this language is perfectly proper on the supposition of Christ's pre-existence, but very improper on the contrary supposition; for how could a mere man be otherwise made than of a woman, and under the law?"

§ 5. In the Epistle to the Ephesians, chap. 3: 19, the apostle speaks of the love of Christ, which passes knowledge; but where was the extraordinary love of Christ, if he existed not before he was born of the virgin, and had no nature higher than mere humanity? To talk of this love as surpassing knowledge, is to burlesque it—seeing many of our fellow-mortals have displayed equal affection with motives infinitely inferior.

§ 6. Permit me, my dear Benjamin, to call your attention to another scripture testimony in favor of the true divinity of my dear Lord and Savior. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. 2 : 5–11. In the introduction to this celebrated text the apostle is exhorting to unity and brotherly love, with various other christian graces, among the most conspicuous of which are humility and self-denial. And in order to prevail with the people to whom he wrote more effectually, he sets before them the example of Jesus; showing them how great he was originally; how low he condescended for the salvation of mankind; and what were the happy consequences respecting himself. So that Jesus Christ is evidently spoken of, in these words, as existing in three very different conditions—before his incarnation, in his state of humiliation, and his state of exaltation. And these three conditions of our blessed Redeemer are essentially necessary to the apostle's argument. Take away any one of them, and the propriety of the example is destroyed, and the force of the argument utterly enervated. If we take away his natural and original dignity, then there was no humiliation in becoming man, nor was there any propriety in God's bestowing upon him a reward so infinitely superior to every thing he could have deserved. But if he was by nature the Son of God, if he was originally in the form of God, and then humbled himself to the lowest pitch of poverty and distress to work out salvation for the sons of men, then there was the strictest propriety and decorum in exalting him to the head of the universe.

§ 7. "I have often considered carefully," says Dr. Price, "the interpretation which the Socinians give of these words, and the more I have considered it, the more confirmed I have been in thinking it forced and unnatural.

Indeed, the turn and structure of this passage are such, that I find it impossible not to believe that the humiliation of Christ, which St. Paul had in view, was not the exchanging of one condition on earth for another, but his exchanging of the glory he had with God before the world was, for the condition of a man, and leaving of that glory, to encounter the difficulties of human life, and to suffer and to die on the cross. This was, in truth, an event worthy to be held forth to the admiration of Christians. But if the apostle means only that Christ, though exalted above others by working miracles, yet consented to suffer and die as other men; if, I say, St. Paul means only this, the whole passage is made cold and trifling; no more being said of Christ than might have been said of St. Paul himself, or any other of the apostles." Simpson. Deity of Christ. 249.

§ 8. Another author says, "I have taken the pains to examine nearly all the fathers of the three first centuries who referred to this text; and now I declare, upon the whole, I have not the smallest doubt remaining upon my mind that it is justly translated in our English Bible." Burgh's Enq. &c. p. 299; see also pp. 9 and 144–156. "I believe," says Dr. Doddridge, "this scripture may be left to speak for itself. The being, of whom all these things are predicated, must be divine. To suppose otherwise, is to throw an impenetrable cloud over all language, and to render the Bible the most dangerous book in the world. How any serious and honest mind can be satisfied with the Socinian interpretation, is hard to conceive."

§ 9. The last passage to which I would invite the attention of my dear Benjamin, is that in the Epistle to the Hebrews; an epistle originally addressed to our beloved people. The pious and learned Dr. Simpson says, "There is no part of the writings of this apostle which speaks more excellent things of our Savior than the first chapter of his most learned Epistle to the Hebrews. The whole is an ad-

mirable piece of reasoning, and eloquent at the same time in a very high degree. I verily believe there is not in the world a piece of writing equally elegant and argumentative, equally persuasive and conclusive." Deity, p. 258. Dr. Buchanan told me, many years since, that, whilst traveling in India, he heard of a learned Jew who had commenced writing a refutation of this epistle, but, before he had proceeded far in his work, he dropped his pen and exclaimed, "The Benjamite is too strong for me," and embraced the Christian religion. To return to our subject.

§ 10. The passage to which I refer is chapter the first, 1–3. "God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." Upon these words Dr. Whitby remarks, "I believe it is as impossible to understand how a man should have this empire over all things in heaven and in earth, and over death itself, and yet be a mere man, as it is to understand any mystery in the sacred Trinity."

Now, my dear Benjamin, from the account which is here given of the Son of the Highest, we may well say that human language wants terms to convey ideas of a more exalted kind. What could have been said to elevate his character that is not said? We can know of nothing higher, nothing greater, nothing better, nothing more sublime than this description. Every thing is said that implies equality. He is the Son of God; the heir of all things; the constitutor of all ages; the brightness of his Father's glory; the express image of his person; the sustainer of the universe. From all these considerations united, it is very evident we

cannot think of our blessed Savior too highly, love him too intensely, or expect too much from his fullness.

§ 11. From what has been observed in the whole of this paragraph, am I not justified, my dear Benjamin, in drawing the conclusion that if Jesus Christ be not essentially God, then the Bible is either unintelligible, even in its plainest expressions, or it contains the most inconsistent scheme that was ever invented. If our Savior be not, in the highest sense, God, those writings must lead us into the most fatal errors; for no words can be plainer, as has been shown, and there are many others which affirm him to be so. Besides, it was foretold, that in the days of Messiah idolatry was to be abolished. "The loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of man shall be made low; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day; and the idols he shall utterly abolish; in that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats." Isa. 2: 17, 18, 20. Idolatry is the reverse and direct opposite to Christianity, or the day of Christ. To destroy this was the great end of Christ's coming into the world, 1 John, 3: 8; and the design of Paul's commission to the Gentiles. Acts, 26:17, 18. But unless Christ were God, the true, living, and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, his religion would be so far from destroying idolatry, that it would only be a more refined and dangerous species of it.

§ 12. My conclusion on this subject is corroborated by many of the most pious and learned writers. I will select but one from the pen of Dr. Macknight. "I would observe here, once for all, that if the Socinian explication of the texts which attribute unto Jesus the names, perfections, and actions of the true God is admitted, it will be very difficult to clear the evangelists and apostles from the imputation of having laid in men's way a violent temptation

to idolatry. For it is well known that as in all ages men have been exceeding prone to worship false gods, so it was the prevailing vice of the world when the New Testament was written, that the grossest corruption of the morals of mankind had ever flowed from this poisonous spring, (Prov. 1 : 14;) and that to destroy idolatry, and to bring mankind to the worship of the true God, was the great end proposed by God in all the revelations he made of himself to men. This being the case, is it to be imagined that either Christ himself, who brought the last and the best revelation of the divine will, or his apostles, who committed that revelation to writing, would, on any occasion, have used such expressions as in their plain and obvious meaning could not fail to lead, at least the bulk of mankind, to think that the names, perfections, and actions of the true God were ascribed to a creature, and that the worship due to the true God was due to him, (Heb. 1 : 6,) while in reality they mean no more than that he was miraculously formed, was commissioned to deliver a new religion to the world, was endowed with power of miracles, and in consideration of his exemplary death, was raised from the grave and had divine honors conferred upon him? Instead of reforming the world, this was to have laid in their way such a temptation to idolatry as they could not well resist. Nor has the effect been any other than was to be expected, for the generality of Christians, moved by these expressions, have all along considered Christ as God, and honored him accordingly." Harm. sec. 2, p. 5, note.

Having now pointed out a few of the awful and pernicious consequences which must inevitably follow if Christ be not the true and living God, I will, in my next letter, mention a few of the happy results if Christ be truly God.

Farewell.

Letter III.

CONSEQUENCES IF CHRIST BE GOD.

My Dear Benjamin,

Agreeably to my promise, I will now proceed to show,

Secondly, the happy consequences if Christ *be truly* God.

§ 1. We see then that God is love. The incarnation, obedience, sufferings, and death of Christ are, every where in the sacred Scripture, mentioned as the highest manifestation of God's love, and of the compassion of the Savior to man. When our blessed Savior, in his conversation with Nicodemus, had mentioned the fact that the Son of man should die, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life, he exclaims: "For God so loved the world," &c. John, 3 : 14, 15, 16. Here is a *sic* without a *sicut*, i. e. a love without a parallel, a love that surpasses all understanding. What an astonishing act of love was this, for the Father to give the delight, the darling of his soul out of his very bosom for poor and miserable sinners! All tongues must needs pause and falter that attempt the expression of his grace. Who would deliver a child, the child of his delight, an only child, to death, for the greatest inheritance in the world? what tender parent can endure the parting with such a child? When Hagar was taking her last leave (as she thought) of her Ishmael, "And she went and sat down over against him a good way off, as it were a bow-shot, for she said, Let me not see the death of the child; and she sat over against him and lifted up her voice and wept." Gen. 21 : 16. O! it was painful to part. How

heart-piercing was the language of David, even for a rebellious son: "And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept, and as he wept, thus he said: O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom, would God I had died for thee! O, Absalom my son! my son!" 2 Sam. 18:33. What a rent has the death of some children made in the heart of some parents, which will never be closed up in this world! Yet surely did ever any child lie so close to any parent's heart as Christ did to his Father's, and yet he willingly parts with him and delivers him up to death, a cursed death for sinners, yea, even the chief of sinners. Millions of angels were nothing compared with the Son of God. The nearer the relation was between God and Christ, the greater was his love shown to us. Christ, God's own Son, his first born, his only begotten Son, the Son of his love, who lay in his bosom, and had been his delight from everlasting—for him to be sent to recover and save man, vile, sinful, and undone man—the Son to be employed for the servant, the slave, the enemy! O, my dear Benjamin, how astonishingly great is the love of God! Jehovah himself declared that it was the highest manifestation of Abraham's love to him when, upon his command, he was willing to offer up his only son Isaac; but O how infinitely short did that come of his own love, in sending his only begotten Son to suffer and to die to save guilty men. Well might the apostle say, "Hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die; but God commendeth his love towards us, in that, when we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. 5: 5–8. Again says the same apostle, praying for the Ephesians that they might "be able to comprehend with all

saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge." Eph. 3: 18, 19. How expressive the language of the apostle John: "God is love. In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 John, 4: 8, 9, 10. Now consider, my dear Benjamin, that upon the hypothesis that Christ was mere man, all these Scriptures lose all their force and significance. For what is there so remarkably endearing in the consideration that God gave up a man like ourselves to extreme sufferings and disgrace, when he had already acted in a similar manner in every instance where virtuous characters had fallen into the hands of unreasonable and wicked men? Or what was there so condescending in the conduct of Jesus, when he knew the infinite reward that was set before him? But if Jesus was the real and proper Son of God, then the love of God in not sparing him, and the condescension of Christ in leaving the infinite beatitude of heaven, taking upon him human nature, and dying to redeem the apostate sons of Adam, are conspicuous; and the declarations of Jesus and his apostles are inexpressibly proper, tender, and pathetic.

§ 2. Further: let it be noticed, that if Christ be not truly God in the highest and strictest sense, then the argument urged by our Savior and his apostles will be inconclusive and vain; and God, by thus giving and sending his Son, showed more love to Christ than to the world: for the opponents of the divinity of Christ tell us "that he who is but a creature, is, after a short obedience and suffering upon earth, made a god, receives divine honors, not only from men but from the angels and archangels, and has universal empire and dominion over all other creatures." For the same reason, if Christ be but a creature, his own

love to mankind, in coming into the world, and doing and suffering what he did, (which is so highly magnified in Scripture,) does not appear to be very extraordinary, because he himself was the greatest gainer imaginable. But upon the supposition that Christ is truly God, his love to mankind was indeed transcending, amazing, and surpassing knowledge; which leads me to notice,

§ 3. That if Christ be truly God, then his example of love and obedience to his Father, and love and compassion to man, is indeed unparalleled.

The Scriptures speak frequently in terms of high commendation on this subject; and even those who deny his real divinity and his atoning sacrifice, speak in exalted terms of his example. But, if he was not truly God before his incarnation; if he was not rich before he became poor; if he had no glory with the Father before he became a man of suffering; if he was not equal with God before he became a servant and was made in the likeness of men; I ask, with reverence indeed, wherein did his example exceed the examples of that cloud of witnesses presented to our view in the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. 11? But on this particular I shall not enlarge, and I refer you, my dear Benjamin, to what I have said in a former letter (p. 362.) I proceed to observe,

§ 4. That if Christ be truly God, then sin appears indeed in its most odious manner.

One of the most common and most successful devices of Satan to lead men into sin and misery, is to hide the evil of sin from their eyes. Hence he persuaded our first parents that they should not die, even if they should break God's law, and he succeeded; and every sin committed, is committed upon the same principle, viz. although I do wrong, yet I shall escape punishment. But God, who has no pleasure in the death of the sinner, says, "O do not this abominable thing that I hate." Jer. 44: 4. He has indeed man-

ifested his hatred of sin, and determination to punish it, by awful judgments inflicted on individuals, families, and nations. Myriads of angels have been cast out of heaven, our first parents banished from Paradise, a world destroyed by the flood, the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah consumed by fire from heaven, Pharaoh and his host drowned in the Red Sea, the holy city of Jerusalem and our beautiful temple laid in ruins, and our whole nation scattered among all people under heaven, &c. &c. But O, my dear Benjamin, what is all this, yea, and even the torments of hell, when compared with the manifestation of God's wrath and indignation against sin, when he sent his own Son into the world, who knew no sin, to be made a sacrifice for sin? 2 Cor. 5: 21. In the former we may see much of the evil of sin, but not so much as we see in the sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus Christ; here is the clearest and most awful discovery and fullest representation of it—for the Son of God, the only-begotten of his Father, to become a son of man, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; to be smitten and stricken; to tread the wine-press of the wrath of God; to be obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; to cry out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And all this to atone for sin. This is indeed a manifestation of its infinite evil which the world never saw before, and never will see again. The numberless sacrifices which were slain to atone for sin, taught something of its evil nature and consequences; but the blood of Christ, shed for the remission of sins, speaks much louder. What the apostle said of the love of God, we may apply with equal propriety to his holiness and the evil of sin. Now we know that God is holy, and sin an abomination, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world to be the propitiation for our sins. 1 John, 4: 9, 10.

§ 5. If Christ be truly God, then we also see the propriety of honoring him as we do the Father.

We ought to love him supremely, believe in him cordially, and obey him unreservedly; the dignity of his person calls for the highest esteem, reverence and veneration which angels or men can possibly give unto him. Besides, it is the absolute will of the Father that all men should honor the Son even as they honor him. John, 5: 23. For, having the same essence and nature with the Father, the Father will have him receive the same honor which he himself receives; and whoever denies it to the Son, reflects dishonor on the Father, who will not suffer any thing derogatory to the glory of his Son.

There is a story related of Bishop Amphilochius, who, to convince the emperor of the importance of honoring the Son as we honor the Father, one day coming into the presence of the emperor and of his son Arcadius, (who now ruled jointly with his father,) made his humble obeisance to the emperor himself, but slightly noticed his son. The emperor was greatly offended, and sharply reproved the bishop for his neglect of his son. The bishop, instead of making an apology, justified his conduct by saying he considered it indeed his duty to pay the greatest respect to the emperor, but did not think it either necessary or proper to pay the same homage to his son. The emperor became the more enraged, and ordered him to be driven from his presence. Whilst they were laying hands on the bishop, he turned to the emperor and said, O Emperor, thou being but a man, canst not bear the contempt or disparagement of thy son, how canst thou think the great God can bear the contempt of his Son which men cast upon him? The emperor was much affected at this, begged the bishop's pardon, and commended his ingenuity. Nicephor. b. 12, c. 9. Sozom. L. 7. c. 6.

§ 6. Jesus Christ requires supreme love, Matt. 10: 37, 38, and the apostle says, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maran-atha." 1 Cor. 16 · 22.

A believing, experimental knowledge of the unparalleled love of Christ compels to supreme love. Hence, says one apostle, "the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again." 2 Cor. 5: 14, 15. And another apostle says, "We love him because he first loved us." 1 John, 4: 19. There is an invincible force in love itself, "for love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave: many waters cannot quench love, nor can the floods drown it; if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would be utterly contemned." Canticles, 8: 6, 7.

§ 7. Love is of a nature so powerful that we can no more resist it and break the force of it, than we can resist death or fire. Nothing but the thing loved can quench or satisfy it. So vehement a love is there kindled in the heart of believers towards Christ, it makes so strong and mighty impressions on the heart, that they cannot endure any separation from him. No opposition can extinguish it, no other satisfaction can bribe it and entice it away from Christ.

As death conquers all, kings and peasants, high and low, rich and poor, bond and free, young and old, weak or strong, there is no disputing of his authority or counteracting of his power; for all ranks and degrees of men must, whether they will or not, be subject to him, the king of terrors; so the believer's love to Christ overcomes all things, and surmounts all difficulties which oppose his enjoyment of him. He can part with all, and bear all, or any thing, for the sake of Christ; father, mother, wife and children, houses and land, a good name, credit and reputation, are nothing to the believer, in comparison with Christ; and he cheerfully quits them when they stand in competition with him. "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of

all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Phil. 3 : 8, 9.

§ 8. Further: as we are to honor and love Christ because he is the true God, so also we are commanded to believe in him, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." John, 14 : 1. One great design of divine revelation is to exhibit Christ as the object of faith. That the promised Messiah was the object of faith and foundation of hope to the saints under the Old Testament, from the righteous Abel down to Zechariah, who was slain between the temple and the altar, we are assured by the apostle in his Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. 11. And for the same end and purpose the New Testament was written. Let me recommend to your attention, my dear Benjamin, the following passages: "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, ye might have life through his name." John, 20 : 31. "Whosoever denies the Son, the same has not the Father; but he that acknowledgeth the Son, hath the Father also—whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God—who is he that overcomes the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" 1 John, 2 : 23. 4 : 15. 5 : 5.

Again, I would observe that Jesus Christ also requires universal and unreserved obedience, and makes it a characteristic mark of his disciples. He not only requires that they shall be baptized in his name, as well as in the name of the Father and of the Holy Ghost, but also that they shall observe all things he has commanded. Matt. 28 : 19, 20. Again he says, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." John, 15 : 14. And when the voice from heaven, in the presence of Moses and Elijah, proclaimed

Jesus to be the Son of God, Matt. 17 : 5, which was doubtless in allusion to Deut. 18 : 19, that Jesus Christ was the prophet therein promised, whom men were to obey on peril of being cut off, and all the calamities which have come upon our dear people since the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, have been on account of not obeying him, as has been fully proved in a former letter. (p. 290.)

§ 9. If Jesus Christ be the true and living God, then what shall we say concerning them who deny his real divinity, and refuse to honor him with the *same* honor they profess to give unto the Father? My dear Benjamin, I tremble when I think on their awful condition, and almost hesitate to write my thoughts on the subject, lest I should be considered uncharitable or intolerant. God forbid! for I myself have been a blasphemer; but God has had mercy upon me, called me by his grace, and revealed his Son in me; and I pray, my dear Benjamin, that all who refuse to honor Jesus may obtain like mercy. Nor would I say or do any thing that should have even the appearance of preventing any one from thinking or speaking on any *religious* subject more than any other. But remember, my dear Benjamin, that our thoughts and words must be guided by the unerring word of God. And as it would be false charity not to tell a man that he is off of the right road, merely to prevent him from some momentary unpleasant feelings by discovering to him his mistake, how much worse and more blamable would be my conduct, were I to deceive you, or any person else, by saying "it is of no importance whether we believe Jesus is the true God or not; it will only be an error of the mind, and if we are but sincere in what we believe, that is all which God requires of us;" when I know that the sacred Scriptures teach otherwise, as appears from the following passages: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God

abideth on him." John, 3 : 36. Again, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." John, 8 : 24. "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which he has testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God, has made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God has given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." 1 John, 5 : 9–13.

§ 10. I am aware, my dear Benjamin, that there are those who, whilst they deny that Jesus is equal with God, yet say "Christ ought to be honored and worshiped *more* or *less*, for *some* reason or *other*." But all this is unscriptural, irrational and fatal. "According to the doctrine of the Socinians," says Dr. Trapp, "our blessed Savior is naturally a mere man, but by the will of the Father advanced to the dignity of a God; and being so advanced, he is truly and properly God. Now I desire to be informed how this notion differs from that of the ancient heathen concerning their deifying their heroes and turning men into gods? It is just the same notion, and is clothed with the same absurdity and impiety. To suppose such a fictitious God is gross polytheism, and to worship such an one is gross idolatry." Again he says: "If the Son and the Holy Ghost be God, ought they not to be honored, adored, prayed to, and glorified as such? And if they be not God, ought they to be honored, adored, and prayed to, and glorified as such? If they be not God, we who call ourselves orthodox are idolaters; if they be God, those whom we call heretics upon this article are blasphemers." p. 5, 6, and 166. "Socinus," says

the learned Dr. Stillingfleet, "was a strenuous advocate for the worship of Christ, for he says that to deny invocation to him is not a simple error or mere mistake, but a most pernicious error, an error that leads to Judaism, and is in effect the denying of Christ, and tends to epicurism and atheism." Smalcius says, "There are no Christians which refuse to give divine worship to Christ." Trinity, p. 150. "The foreign Socinians," says the pious Mr. Simpson, "deny any to be Christians who refuse divine adoration and invocation to Christ; hence they have excluded all our English Unitarians (as the Socinians here call themselves) from being Christians, who deny this to Christ." Plea for the Deity of Christ, 227. "These are the men," says Mr. Trapp, "who ridicule orthodoxy on the one hand, and heresy on the other, as absurd and ridiculous notions, and are for having all persons think freely for themselves. God forbid that any body should be denied that liberty, but nobody that thinks truly for himself will think as they do. These are the men who are so accurate in their thoughts and writings, so careful to avoid contradiction, and so very forward to charge them upon others; as if all the regular arguing, all the clear and distinct ideas in the world belong to them. Whereas, in fact, there never was upon the face of the earth a more senseless and self-contradicting scheme than theirs—nothing more irrational and absurd, as well as impious and profane." Trinity, p. 186. "The Socinians," says Dr. Young, "have been very unfortunate in the execution of their main design, for they have not purged mystery out of the Scriptures, they have only changed its place—they have taken mystery out of the doctrines of the sacred Scripture where it was venerable and worthy the majesty of God, and have placed it in the phrase of the Scripture, where it is opprobrious and repugnant to God's sincerity." Serm fol. 2, p. 78.

Now, my dear Benjamin, I will close this paragraph

by recommending to you most affectionately the advice of the Psalmist, "Be wise now therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth: serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling: kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little: blessed are all they who put their trust in him." Psa. 2 : 10–12.

§ 11. If Christ be the Son of God, how great the encouragement for poor sinners to put their trust in him for pardon, peace, acceptance, and eternal salvation! We may be sure that there is an infinite value, worth, and efficacy in Christ's obedience and suffering; that he was able to accomplish the work which the Father had given him to do, and is now able to save to the very uttermost all that come unto God by him. What can be too hard for the power of the Son of God to effect, or too high for his obedience and sufferings to merit? Had Christ been only the Son of man, then indeed faith could not have borne up with such confidence; but he being the Son of God also, and having the nature, essence, and attributes of God, faith may triumph as to the efficacy and meritoriousness of his work. It was the blood of God that was shed as the price of our redemption. Acts, 20 : 28.

What a fullness of grace, merit, and efficacy must there be in the sacrifice of Him in whom "dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily?" Col. 2 : 9. "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more should the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God." "Seeing then we have a great High Priest that has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession; for we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all

points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Heb. 4 : 14–16. 9 : 13, 14.

§ 12. If Christ be the true and living God, O how happy and blessed are true believers. What can there be too great for God to do, or too good to give, after having given his own Son to die for them? "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Rom. 8 : 32.—all things for time and eternity; "for godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come," 1 Tim. 4 : 8.—all things for body and soul; "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you," Matt. 6 : 33.—all things that are for our real advantage; "for all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." 1 Cor. 3 : 21–23. O believer, raise your expectation ever so high, and it will not be a castle built in the air. Your faith rests upon a sure and solid foundation. What greater security could God himself have given than the gift of his own Son? This is a sure pledge of great love; and what will not love, great love, such love ("for God so loved the world") do for those whom he loves? With the apostle, ye may be confident of this very thing, "that he who has begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ;" Phil. 1 : 5; and with the same apostle you may say triumphantly, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" &c. &c. Rom. 8 : 33–39.

§ 13. Lastly. If Jesus Christ is the true and living God, then the friends of Zion may take courage in God their Savior. Whoever meets with disappointment, the cause of Christ must increase, extend, and triumph. Glorious things are spoken of Zion, the city of our God. The conversion of the Gentiles which are afar off, and of our dear people scattered every where, is foretold by the mouth of all the holy prophets. These promises are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus; the signs of the times, too, are most pleasing and encouraging; never was there such a variety of religious and benevolent institutions of different names and denominations, and yet all united under the banner of King Jesus, all aiming at the extension of his kingdom, which is an everlasting kingdom. True, Satan seems to be more active, his emissaries more numerous, bold and persevering than formerly; yet even this is a good sign. When the people of God were inactive in the cause of Christ, and quietly left the Gentiles and the Jews in the power of Satan, (the "god of this world, who blinds the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them," 2 Cor. 4 : 4,) his goods were at peace, he was comparatively inactive; but, now they are disturbed, and in danger of being taken from him, he is enraged, sounds the alarm, fills up his ranks with new recruits from all classes of men, and defies the armies of the living God, saying, "I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them." Exod. 15 : 9. "But who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain; and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof, with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace, unto it." Zech. 4 : 7. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against Jeho-

vah, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, Jehovah shall have them in derision: then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." Psa. 2 : 1–6. "The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Psa. 110 : 1. "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," Psa. 45, 6. "It is the throne of God. He who sitteth on it is the Omnipotent; universal being is in his hand. Revolution, force, fear, as applied to his kingdom, are words without meaning. Rise up in rebellion, if thou hast courage. Associate with thee the whole mass of infernal power; begin with the ruin of whatever is fair and good in the little globe; pass from hence to blot the sun from out of his place, and roll the volume of desolation through the starry world,—what hast thou done unto him? It is the puny menace of a worm against him whose frown is perdition." Dr. J. Mason's Messiah's Throne.

§ 14. Antichrist may fall, superstitious observances may cease, religious institutions may be tumbled into ruins, empires and kingdoms may be overturned, princes and governors may be deposed, the wise men of the world may take part with the enemies of truth, error and delusion may run like wild-fire among the thickest ranks of the people, unbelievers may rage, and minute philosophers imagine a vain thing—but the Bible shall rise out of its present obscurity, and being stripped of all human appendages, shall be universally had in honor. The method of redeeming a lost race, therein revealed, shall be generally seen and embraced; the enemies of evangelical religion shall be confounded world without end. Jesus shall reign triumphant over all opposition, in his glorious human body, at the right hand of the majesty on high, till all the ends of the earth have

seen his great salvation, and every opposing power is brought into complete subjection. "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only does wondrous things; and blessed be his glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen." Psa. 72 : 18, 19. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." Jude, 24, 25.

Letter IV.

DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Dear Benjamin,

Having proved, I hope to your satisfaction, the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, I will now also briefly show the divinity of the Holy Ghost. But let it be observed, that although we have not so great a variety of proofs of the divinity of the Holy Spirit as we have of the blessed Jesus, yet those which we have are as satisfactory as those of the Father and of the Son. This will evidently appear if we consider,

First, that all the divine criteria are ascribed to the Holy Spirit as well as to the Father and to the Son, and therefore he must be truly God.

I. The names peculiar to Deity.

§ 1. The Holy Spirit is called God in the strict sense of

the word. The Psalmist informs us that our fathers "provoked the Most High in the wilderness, and tempted God in their heart." Psa. 78 : 17, 18. The Prophet Isaiah applies this to the Holy Spirit, chap. 63 : 10, and so did the apostle, saying, "Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost says, To day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness, when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years." Heb. 3 : 7–9. Hence it is evident that the Holy Spirit is God the Most High.

§ 2. Further: the Holy Spirit is called by the incommunicable name of Jehovah, and therefore must be truly God. Moses informs us that it was Jehovah alone that did lead the children of Israel, "and there was no strange god with him;" Deut. 33 : 12; which work the Prophet Isaiah applies to the Holy Ghost. Isa. 63 : 11, 12. He therefore is Jehovah, the true and eternal God. Jehovah, whom Isaiah saw sitting upon the throne, high and lifted up, and whose train filled the temple, and whom the seraphim adored, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory," is Jehovah the Spirit, according to the testimony of St. Paul, who, preaching at Rome to the mixed multitude of Jews, some of whom believed and some believed not, says, "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Isaiah the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and not understand, and seeing ye shall see and not perceive," &c. Seeing then that these are the very words which Jehovah spake by Isaiah, and yet these words spake the Holy Ghost, says St. Paul, the Holy Ghost therefore must be Jehovah.

It is no solid objection to say that the Evangelist John calls this a vision of the glory of Christ; so it was; but this only proves that the glory of Jesus, and the glory of the Holy Ghost as Jehovah, are one and the same. Hence the works of creation, the resurrection of Christ, &c. &c.

which are the works of Jehovah, and not the works of any particular person in the blessed Trinity as belonging to the economy of redemption, are ascribed alike to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Hence it has been observed by the judicious Mr. Nelson, that "the glory which appeared to Isaiah, is the glory of the Father, Rev. 4: 8; and of the Son, John, 12: 41; and of the Holy Ghost, Acts, 28: 26. Now since three persons are manifested in one glory, and the manifestations are designed to bring us into the knowledge of the things manifested; it is a great probability that the one glory teaches us the unity, or identity of nature, of the persons manifested in it." Script. Doct. on the Trinity, page 115.

II. The incommunicable attributes of God are attributed to the Holy Spirit, and therefore he is truly God.

§ 3. Eternity and unchangeableness.

Jesus Christ is said "to have offered himself unto God, through the Eternal Spirit." Heb. 9: 14. The Holy Spirit created the world, as will be shown hereafter, and therefore must have existed before any thing was made. I have already shown that the Holy Spirit is called by the incommunicable name Jehovah; and as that word signifies self-existent, eternal, and unchangeable, therefore the Holy Spirit must be the same as the Father and the Son, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; he that was, and is, and is to come, the Lord God Almighty. "The Holy Spirit," says one of the fathers, "always was, is, and always will be: he had no beginning, nor shall have any end, but is always joined with the Father and the Son." Gregor. Naci. Orat. 44. fo. 1, p. 711.

§ 4. Omnipresence, which is an essential attribute of God, is also ascribed to the Holy Spirit. "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there; if I take the wings of

the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." Ps. 139: 7—10. Now here, as the Jehovah to whom the Psalmist addresses himself is acknowledged to be every where present and immense; so also, and in a sense as unlimited, is his Spirit and his presence; for that presence from whom none can go, as well as that presence from whom none can flee; they from whom neither heaven, nor hell, nor the uttermost part of the sea can hide; they from whom no place in the universe can exclude, must surely be present in all places alike; and consequently the Son and the Holy Ghost must be as strictly omnipresent as the Father. "By the word *presence* in this passage I understand," says Mr. Wheatly, "the divine word or person of the Son, whom God calls his presence, and promises to Moses, upon his earnest intercession, to send before him, to lead the people, and to give them rest; and whom accordingly Isaiah calls the Angel of his presence, who was afflicted in their affliction and saved them; who in his love and his pity redeemed them, and bare them, and carried them all the days of old. Isa. 63: 9. Agreeable with this are the words of Moses, Because the Lord loved thy Father, therefore he chose their seed after him, and brought thee out in his sight, (or rather by his presence, as the word *Bephanav* signifies,) with his mighty power, out of Egypt. This is that presence or face of the Lord before whom John the Baptist was to go and prepare his way; and who, as it appears from the prophet Malachi, was himself no less than Jehovah." On the Creeds, p. 165. How consoling, my dear Benjamin, is the truth to the believer in Christ, that he can never be cast out from the presence, grace, or protection of the Holy Ghost. Wherever his lot is cast, in the darkest dungeon or in a cave, in the uttermost ends of the earth, far distant from all fellow Christians, yet the Holy Spirit, who is every where present. is with him, to lead and teach,

to support and comfort him, and bring him through into the presence of God the Father; for by this immense omnipresent Spirit, both those that are nigh, and those that are afar off, have access to the Father. Eph. 2: 16.

§ 5. Omniscience is an attribute peculiar to the true God, and is ascribed to the Holy Spirit; therefore the Holy Spirit is the true God. He not only knoweth the hearts of men, but also the secrets of Jehovah. 1 Cor. 2: 10, 11. Nothing in the Father, however profound, or however sublime, surpasses the knowledge of his Holy Spirit. He is inwardly conscious of the things of God, as the spirit of man is of the things of man; for, in knowing the mind of the Father who creates, he must know the things comprehended in him, viz. the nature, and powers, and operations of all things; for the knowledge of God is equal to his power, and nothing was made which he does not comprehend. If then the secrets of the creature and the depth of God are searched and understood, and the things past and the things to come known and foretold by the Spirit of God; (for the economy of providence relating to man, to the end of the world, and contained in the writings of both Testaments, was revealed to the prophets by the Holy Spirit;) it will then follow that the Holy Ghost knoweth all things, is every where present, and is true God—for the knowledge of all things is a Scripture argument of the truth of the Godhead of the subject knowing. When our blessed Lord and Savior promised his disciples that he would send another Comforter, even the Holy Ghost, he describes one part of his office to be "to show them things to come." Now this is a power which he himself declares that none can exert but he alone who is truly God; for when he challengeth the idols to plead their cause, and to give convincing proof of their divinity, "Produce your cause, saith the Lord, bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob; let them bring them forth and show us what shall happen; let them

show the former things what they be, that we may consider them and know the latter end of them; or declare us things to come; show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know ye are gods." Isa. 41: 21–23. Hence the Lord Jesus Christ himself appeals to his foretelling of future events, as one test of his own divinity. "I tell you," says he, (i. e. that Judas should betray him,) "before it come, that when it come to pass, ye may believe that I am," John, 13: 19; i. e. I am the true God, which knows all things before they happen, even those which none but the true God can foresee. The amazing gift of prophecy, declaring the end from the beginning, and foretelling particular events long beforehand as exactly as they came to pass, with the particular circumstances of them, was from the Holy Spirit, and plainly shows his infinite knowledge. "He that teaches man knowledge, shall not he know?" Ps. 94: 9, 10. Of all kinds of knowledge, prescience, or knowledge of things to come, seems to be the hardest; of all the acts of prescience, the foreknowledge of things which depend upon the wills of free agents seems to be the most difficult. But is any thing too hard for the Spirit to do, or too difficult for him to know? A remarkable instance of the prescience or foreknowledge of the Holy Spirit we have recorded in that history, where we find a prophet uttering these words: "O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord, Behold, a child shall be born in the house of David, Josiah by name, and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee; and men's bones shall burn upon thee." This prophecy was delivered some hundreds of years before its accomplishment: the certain birth and name of the prince, of what family he should be, and some remarkable things he should do, are foretold as exactly as if they had then been done; and yet these events seemed to be very contingent and uncertain; there were ten or eleven kings in David's line after the prophet and before Josiah; and

what might happen among them, the birth of this prince and his name, his destroying of the altar and burning of the priests' bones thereupon, seemed to depend upon the voluntary acts of men; but God the Spirit, as well as the Father, understands the thoughts afar off, and foresees the end from the beginning; a knowledge too great for any creature, and peculiar to the only true God."

§ 6. Omnipotence, or almighty power, is also the peculiar attribute of Jehovah, and is ascribed to the Holy Ghost. This is evident from the works which are ascribed to him, as will be shown hereafter. I shall sum up what has been said in a few words. He who is omnipresent, omnipotent, eternal, unchangeable, infinitely, sovereignly gracious, and omniscient, is no creature, but is true and real God, of the same nature and perfections with the Father and the Son.

III. From the attributes of God, ascribed to the Holy Spirit, I proceed to notice,

§ 7. The works which he performs.

Creation, which is the exclusive work of God, is ascribed to the Holy Spirit, and therefore he is truly God. Psa. 33: 6; 104: 30. Job, 26: 13; 33: 4. The Prophet Isaiah describes the almighty power and exalted majesty of the Holy Ghost as Creator, in the following passage: "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out the heavens with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor, hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed to him the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing; and Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a

burnt-offering. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity." Isa. 40 : 12–17. Now let it be observed, my dear Benjamin, that these things are ascribed to the Holy Spirit, not in exclusion of the Father and the Son, but in conjunction with them; for the three in heaven are one, one in essence, and one in operation. There is a joint concurrence of all the three persons in the Godhead in the works of nature and Providence, as Christ says: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work; and whatsoever the Father doeth, the Son doeth likewise." The same may be said of the Spirit, who, with the Father and the Son, is the Creator and Maker of all things. The glorious luminaries that adorn the heavens are the product of the Holy Spirit's almighty creating power, and with the same power all the decays of nature are repaired, and the face of the earth is renewed, as it were, by a continual new creation, performed by the Spirit who at first moved upon the face of the waters, and gave being, order, and beauty to the several creatures formed out of the first confused chaos. The Holy Spirit, being one in nature with the Father and the Son, is also one with them in power and operation; and as creation is the work of the Father and of the Son, so it is equally the work of the Holy Spirit. This accounts for the plural form of expressions made use of in respect to the works of creation. "In the beginning God," according to the Hebrew, Gods, "created the heavens and the earth." "Let us make man." "Remember thy Creators in the days of thy youth." "Let Israel rejoice in his Makers." "Where is God my Makers?" "The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under the heavens. He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion," says the prophet Jeremiah. This is the work of

the great God, and of none else; and being the work of the Holy Spirit, as is proved, it follows that he is the great God, otherwise he must be of the number of those gods who shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens, which it were blasphemy once to imagine.

§ 8. Besides the creation of the world, it is to be noticed that the formation of the human nature of Christ is the peculiar work of the Holy Ghost. Luke, 1 : 35. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee. Therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God." By the Holy Ghost, we are to understand a Person; and by the Highest, the same Person. (See Pool's Annot. in Loco.) He might well be called the Highest, as performing a work peculiar to the Most High God. The word overshadowing, it has been justly observed, may allude to the work of the Holy Ghost in the first creation, when he *moved Merachepheth*, i. e. brooded upon the water; or gave prolific virtue to them, as fowls do to their eggs, by sitting upon them. (See Patrick in Loco.) The Holy Spirit, by a secret almighty power, formed Christ's body, animated it with a living soul: the same as is said of the first Adam, "And God breathed into Adam the breath of life, and he became a living soul." Thus, then, we see that the Holy Ghost is the Highest, the Creator, and Maker of man, and particularly of Christ's human nature, and therefore true and real God.

From the consideration of the creation of the universe, I proceed to notice the New Creation as the peculiar work of the Holy Spirit, which proves him to be truly God. The remainder of the subject will be considered in the next letter.

Farewell.

Letter V.

CONTINUATION OF THE SUBJECT.

My Dear Benjamin,

I will now invite your attention to another work of the Holy Spirit, which proves his true divinity, viz.

§ 1. The wonderful work of regeneration, which is ascribed to him. Believers are said to be born of the Spirit, quickened and renewed by the Holy Ghost. This is a new creation, and requires the same almighty power to effect as the first creation did. "We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good works." "It is God that works in us, to will and to do." The same almighty power is put forth in working faith, as was exerted upon Christ, in raising him from the dead. The Holy Ghost, therefore, has manifested his eternal power and godhead, in working faith and holiness in the hearts of sinners.

The new creation seems to be a work of greater difficulty and power than the old. As in the old creation there was nothing to work upon, so there was nothing to oppose: but in the new creation there are strong holds to be pulled down, high thoughts to be brought low, blindness, enmity and obstinacy to be subdued, as well as divine powers and principles to be infused! Hence the regenerate are said to be "born, not of flesh, nor of blood, nor of the will of man, but of God." It requires the efficiency and power of God to make a man a new creature, to cause "old things to pass away, and all things to become new."

The progressive work of sanctification, or the renewing of the soul day by day, is the work of God; hence the Apostle Paul said, "The very God of peace sanctify you

wholly." But as it is well known that sanctification is an eminent work of the Holy Spirit, God chose men to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit; and he actually doth his work; for the Scripture says, "You are sanctified by the Spirit of our God, and transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord, or by the Lord the Spirit.

§ 2. To raise the dead requires the same almighty power as at first created man. Hence it is ascribed to God. "Why should it be thought an incredible thing with you, that God should raise the dead?" Acts, 26 : 8.

It might indeed be thought incredible, that any creature should do it: but cannot the same almighty power that formed the body out of the dust at first, and breathed into it the breath of life, raise it out of the dust a second time, and re-infuse the same vital spirit? But the resurrection of Christ, as well as of Christians, is expressly ascribed to the Holy Spirit in these words of the Apostle Paul: "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you; he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Rom. 8 : 11. The same almighty power was put forth upon the body of Christ in his resurrection, as was exerted in his conception and formation in the womb of the virgin. 1 Pet. 3 : 18.

Christ's resurrection is ascribed to the Father, and to Christ himself; but this does not exclude the agency and concurrence of the Holy Spirit therein; and from this work of his we may well conclude that he is true and real God. The apostles, indeed, healed the sick and raised the dead; but they did it not by their own power or holiness, but by the power of the Holy Spirit, which was poured out abundantly upon them. A mighty power, or an exceeding greatness of power, was exerted upon Christ in raising him from the dead, even the almighty power of

God; the Holy Spirit raised him from the dead as we have seen, therefore he is God Almighty.

§ 3. There are a great many other works of the Spirit which might be insisted on, and from which his deity might be proved, but I shall close this part of the subject with the words of an ancient father—"Christ," says he, "is born, the Spirit is his forerunner; Christ is baptized, he bears his testimony; Christ is tempted, he leads him away; Christ works miracles, he is with him; Christ ascends, he succeeds; what is so great and divine that he cannot do? What is so divine a name, except that of unbegotten and begotten, that he may not be called by it? He is the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the Mind of Christ, the Spirit of the Lord, and himself Lord, the Spirit of adoption, the Spirit of truth, the Spirit of liberty, the Spirit of wisdom and prudence, of counsel and strength, of knowledge, piety, and the fear of the Lord: as the efficient cause of all these, he fills all things with his essence, contains all things, fills the world, and is greater than the world, greater in power and energy than the world can comprehend: he is goodness, righteousness and truth by nature, not by gift; he sanctifies, is not sanctified; he measures, but is not measured; he gives, but does not receive; he fills, but is not filled; he contains, but is not contained; he knows and teaches all things; blows where he will; is angered, tempted; is the Spirit of light and life, who builds temples and dwells in them as God; he does all things that God himself does; he appeared as cloven tongues of fire, he distributes his gifts, made apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers; he is almighty, all-seeing, penetrating into all spirits at the same moment of time, though far dispersed from each other; which plainly shows that he is limited to no place." Therefore he is the true God.

§ 4. Divine worship is another of the divine criteria,

and is ascribed to the Holy Spirit, and proves him to be truly God.

He is said to dwell in the saints as his temple, which implies his dignity and greatness, and to be obeyed and worshiped.

He, as God, sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God, for he receives the adoration and worship of the saints. He dwells in this temple, not as a priest or servant, but as God, as it is written, "The Lord is in his holy temple." Psa. 11 : 4.

That the seraphims and cherubims, those glorious creatures with six wings, the highest created spirits of heaven, ascribe the same homage to the Holy Spirit as they do to the Father and the Son, I have shown before from the testimony of the apostles. Acts, 28 : 25–27.

An oath has always been esteemed an act of religious worship; it being a solemn appeal to God, as the searcher of hearts, a witness of the truth, or an avenger of the falsehood of what we testify. And yet St. Paul appeals, by an oath, both to the Son and the Holy Ghost. "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost." Now, here he makes as solemn an acknowledgment of the divinity of the Son and the Holy Ghost, and their privacy to his conscience, as he does of the Father's in those other appeals, where he says, God is my witness, or God is my record; or I call God for a record upon my soul; or the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for ever, knoweth that I lie not; or, before God, I lie not. All of them expressions of the same import, and therefore, when compared the one with the other, they show that the apostle revered each of the divine persons alike, and believed them to be all of the same knowledge and might.

§ 5. Baptism is an institution of the Lord Jesus Christ, in which he commands that all nations be baptized, not in

the name of the Father only, but in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. As the Son and the Holy Ghost, therefore, are placed in the same rank with the Father himself, they must consequently be deemed of the same nature and dignity, and as much divine as the Father is: for God and creatures can never be made the joint object of religion; not a single instance in all Scripture can be produced, where any creature is joined with God in an act of worship; much less in so solemn a rite as baptism, wherein we dedicate and devote ourselves to the worship of the persons in whose name we are baptized.

I would have my dear Benjamin to notice particularly, that if the Holy Spirit were a property only, could a property be thus joined with the Father and the Son? They are not properties, they are persons certainly. If the Son and the Spirit were creatures, could they be joined with the Father in this solemn act of baptism? Baptism is the consecration of him who is baptized to the service, of whom? of God and two creatures? No, surely; but of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And whether St. John has said it or not, if there be any meaning in words, *these three are one*, they are the one object of our faith and our love, of our prayers and our praises. And while this form continues to be used in the church, the doctrine of the Trinity cannot perish from it.

In Paul's valedictory blessing to the Corinthians we have a solemn prayer addressed to the blessed Trinity: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." 2 Cor. 13 : 14. This is not a more direct prayer to God for his love, and to Christ for his grace, than it is to the holy and sanctifying Spirit for a communion of his divine gifts.

Thus, my dear Benjamin, I have endeavored to prove

that all the divine criteria are ascribed to the Holy Spirit, as well as to the Father and the Son. I will now,

Secondly, mention some passages of Scripture which also prove the divinity of the Holy Ghost.

§ 6. In the first and second epistles to the Corinthians the apostle says that believers are the temple of God. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy." 1 Cor. 3 : 16, 17. Now he who dwells in the saints, as in his temple, is the living God. "Ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them." 2 Cor. 6 : 16. The Holy Ghost dwells in the saints as in his temple. "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost." 1 Cor. 6 : 19. Therefore the Holy Ghost is the living God. None but God dwells in his saints as in his temple, but the Holy Spirit of God dwells in his saints as his temple, therefore he is God.

"If we are the temple of God," says Theophylact, "because the Spirit of God dwells in us, then the Spirit is God."

"We know no other reason," says Bishop Pearson, "why we are the temple of God, when the Spirit of God dwells in us, but only because the Spirit of God is God." Again, "I understand no other way by which we can be said to be the temple of God, but by the inhabitation of God, as it is written, ye are the temple," &c. On the Creed, p. 320.

"How impudently," says Ambrose, "do you deny the deity of the Holy Ghost, when you read that the Spirit is a temple; for it is written, ye are the temple; but the Spirit has a temple when he dwells in you." De Spir. sanct. L. 3. c. 12. p. 263.

"In this place," says Calvin, "we have a clear testimony, asserting the divinity of the Holy Ghost; for if he were a

creature or a gift only, he would not have made them the temple of God, by dwelling in them." In Loco.

Ananias was struck dead for lying. Acts, 5 : 7. Lying to the Holy Ghost is lying to God, because the Holy Ghost is God. The offence was a tempting, or an endeavor to deceive the Holy Ghost, a trial of skill whether he knew and would punish the fraud. The great Dr. Owen observes, "The Holy Ghost is expressly called God; and having the name of God properly and directly given to him, with respect to spiritual things, or things peculiar to God, he must have the nature of God. Ananias is said to lie to the Holy Ghost; this is repeated and interpreted, 'Thou hast not lied to men, but unto God;' the declaration of the person intended by the Holy Ghost is added for the aggravation of the sin; for he is God, the same person, the same object of the sin of Ananias, is expressed in both places; and therefore the Holy Ghost is God."

§ 7. The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is an unpardonable sin; "Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." Matt. 12 : 31. Therefore the Holy Ghost must be God, for sin against a creature cannot have such heinous aggravation.

§ 8. Further, the inspiration of the Scriptures is ascribed to God. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." 2 Tim. 3 : 16. "God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets," Heb. 1 : 1; but this is the work of the Holy Spirit, "For the prophecy came not in old times by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Pet. 1 : 21; therefore the Holy Spirit is God.

To what has been said, it may not be improper, my dear Benjamin, to add,

Thirdly, a few testimonies from our ancient Rabbins, who considered the *Ruach Hackodesh*, i. e. the Holy Spirit, as truly God.

§ 9. Because Jehovah has said by the prophet, that his "hand laid the foundation of the earth, and his right hand spread the heavens." Isa. 48 : 13. Our Rabbins say that these two hands refer to the second *Sephirah*, called *Chochma*, i. e. wisdom, and to the third, called *Binah*, i. e. understanding, and that these two *Sephireth* made the world. Bechai. Gen. fo. 3. c. 2. They acknowledge that the Spirit which moved on the face of the abyss was not a created mind, but the divine Spirit, the same that David speaks of. Psa. 33 : 6. Leo. Heb. Dial. De Amore. M. B. Israel. Gen. 2. 2. § 7, and many others.

They consider the *Binah* a distinct person, and call him the Mouth of God; because he inspired the prophets to make known the will of God, agreeable to Isaiah, 48 : 16, "The Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me;" and that the angels were created by him. R. Menachem, fo. 34. c. 2. 56, 1. 122. c. 2. 127, 4. 143, 3.

The author of Zohar, and also the author of Sepher Habbachir, say that the third Sephira, Binah, proceeds from the first by the second. See also R. Men. fo. 1. c. 3.

The name Jehovah is ascribed both to the second and the third Sephirah. Zohar in. R. Men. fo. 3. c. 3. fo. 10. c. 4.

They consider the two cherubims over the ark each distinct from the other, and both distinct from the ark, and yet all three united as a similitude of the three distinct persons united in the one Jehovah. Re. Menach. fo. 74. c. 3.

And now, my dear Benjamin, having proved the divinity of the Holy Spirit from the divine criteria ascribed to him, from several passages of Scripture, and from the testimony

of our ancient Rabbins, I will close this subject with the following observation:

§ 10. We see that the Holy Ghost is called Jehovah in the Old Testament, and often God and Lord in the New Testament. The Most High God, whom the Israelites provoked in the wilderness, is, by Isaiah and Paul, declared to be the Holy Ghost. The Lord Jehovah, who alone led the people, was the Holy Ghost, as Isaiah explains it. The King, Jehovah of hosts, who sent the Prophet Isaiah to the people, was the Holy Ghost. It was Jehovah who promised to write his laws in the people's hearts: but, according to the apostle, it was the Holy Ghost who said, I will write my laws in their hearts. The Holy Ghost is also that person who is the highest, and manifested an almighty, creating power in forming Christ's human nature. The Holy Ghost is that God, of whom believers are born; that God to whom Ananias lied; that God, whose temple believers are; that God, who works faith in the heart; that God, by whose inspiration the Scriptures were given; he is that God in whose power the believer's faith stands; that God who sets officers in the church; that God who works in Christians to will and to do; that God who works all in all, in the diversity of gifts bestowed on men; he is the God of patience and consolation; that God who deals to every man the measure of faith; that God who writes his laws in the heart; he is that God of whom is all our sufficiency, and who made the apostles able ministers of the New Testament; that God who comforted the apostles, and enabled them to comfort others. The Holy Ghost is that Lord who gives liberty, and changes men into the image of Christ; he is that Lord who directs our hearts into the love of God, and the patient waiting for Christ; he is that Lord who makes us to increase and abound in love one toward another. Now, my dear Benjamin, if this is the Scripture doctrine concerning the Holy Spirit, which

I verily believe it is, we may then safely conclude that he, as well as the Father and the Son, is the true and real God; those high titles before mentioned being applied to him in as full and unlimited a sense as to either of the other persons in the Godhead; for it cannot be showed that any one of these names or titles of God was ever given in such a manner, and with such circumstances, to any being below the true and living God.

To God the Father, God the Son,
And God the Spirit, three in one,
Be honor, praise and glory given,
By all on earth, and all in heaven.

Farewell.

PART V.

SECOND ADVENT OF THE MESSIAH.

Letter I.

INTRODUCTION.

Dear Brother Benjamin,

§ 1. Agreeably to my promise in a former letter, (p. 178,) I now proceed to consider the second advent of Christ.

In entering on this subject, my feelings are very different from those with which I wrote my former letters: I can only compare them to the different feelings of a person, who, having traveled for a considerable time in a plain and pleasant road, where every by-path was supplied with a direction-post to prevent him from turning out of the right way, and his progress known by a succession of regular milestones, and where he was frequently met by fellow-passengers, but is now entering an extensive forest, where few have traveled before him, and most of them had missed their way without the supply of a proper map, but wholly left to be directed by now and then a marked tree; how different must be his feelings, how trembling his steps, how slow his progress, and how great his anxiety lest he also should miss his way and be lost in a labyrinth, out of which he may not be able to extricate himself without danger! Such are my feelings, and such my fears.

In my former letters I explained prophecies by plain and attested facts which have already come to pass; now I am to describe future events by past prophecies. This is a task in which many have labored in vain, and spent their strength for naught; for it is allowed by all, that prophecies were never intended to be fully understood until near the time of their accomplishment, and sometimes not till after the events had taken place. The remarkable circumstances of Messiah's birth, his life and character, his sufferings and death, his resurrection and ascension, the destruction of Jerusalem, the dispersion of our nation, &c. all were clearly foretold, as has been fully shown in my former letters, yet few understood them till after their accomplishment. The real design of prophecy is, that when they are fulfilled we might have additional evidence of the truth of the sacred Scripture, admit the wisdom and goodness of the author, and thereby our faith and confidence might be strengthened, that those yet unfulfilled will surely be accomplished in God's own time.

§ 2. Under these considerations I assure you, my dear Benjamin, that, were it not for the promise I made to consider the second advent of the Messiah, and your expectation excited thereby, I should gladly omit it. For, after much research, and close examination of what has been written on both sides of the question, I find myself in the same predicament as he who said, "Before I entered college I thought I might fill the professor's chair; after a year's study I found I had been mistaken, but still thought I might supply the place of an assistant teacher; after the second year I was sure I was only fit to be a scholar; but at the close of the third year I was so convinced of my ignorance that I considered myself unfit to be a student." Just so, my dear Benjamin, the more I consider the conflicting and opposite opinions of writers on the subject, the more reluctant I feel to enter on the discussion; for "who is to decide when doctors disagree?"

That Jesus Christ shall come again the second time is expressly taught in the Scriptures, and disputed by none; but in defining the nature and designs of his coming, they widely differ. Some understand by it his last appearance unto the judgment day, while others are of opinion that he will come a second time at the commencement of the millennium, and a third time to judgment.

Again: those who are agreed that Christ will appear at the commencement of the millennium, are disagreed with respect to the nature of his appearance, whether it is to be understood literally or figuratively. The same division of sentiment prevails with respect to the nature of the first resurrection and the millennium itself. With these interesting and important, but difficult subjects, several other topics are intimately connected, which have equally divided the opinions and sentiments of the most learned and pious men of different denominations. The restoration of our beloved nation, the overturning of the Ottoman empire, the destruction of the Western Antichrist, &c. &c. are events which must take place before the second coming of Christ, whether that be to judgment or to commence the millennium, whether it be understood literally or figuratively.

§ 3. It is difficult indeed, if not altogether impossible, to fix the exact time or year when these events are to take place; for, although certain periods of time are mentioned in the sacred Scriptures, yet as we are not sure when these periods commenced, we cannot of course be certain when they will end.

To lay before you, my dear Benjamin, all that has been written on this subject, would not only be inconsistent with the nature of our epistolary correspondence, but would also fill too many volumes. Perhaps the following extracts from Bishop Newton and the Rev. George Stanley Faber, on the Prophecies, are the most judicious as well as the most concise.

§ 4. Bishop Newton, on the book of the Revelation to St. John, chapter 21, says, "It appears, then, that this anti-christian power was to arise in the latter times of the Roman empire, after an end should be put to the imperial power, and after the empire should be divided into ten kingdoms; and it is not only foretold when it should prevail, but moreover how long it should prevail. Here we cannot but observe, that the very same period of time is prefixed for its continuance both by Daniel and by St. John. Wonderful is the consent and harmony between these inspired writers, as in other circumstances of the prophecy, so particularly in this. In Daniel, 7 : 25, 'The little horn' was to 'wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws;' as it is said expressly that they 'shall be given into his hand, until a time and times, and the dividing of time;' or as the same thing is expressed in another place, Daniel, 12 : 17, 'for a time, times, and a half.' In the Revelation it is said of the beast, 13 : 5, 'to whom, in like manner, it was given to make war with the saints, and to overcome them, that power also was given unto him to continue forty and two months;' and 'the holy city,' 11 : 2, 'the Gentiles should tread under foot forty and two months;' and 'the two witnesses,' ver. 3, 'should prophecy a thousand two hundred and three-score days, clothed in sackcloth;' and the woman, the true church of Christ, who fled into the wilderness from persecution, 12 : 6, 14, should be fed and nourished there 'a thousand two hundred and three-score days,' or, as it is otherwise expressed in the same chapter, 'for a time, and times, and half a time.' Now, all these numbers you will find, upon computation, to be the same, and each of them to signify one thousand two hundred and sixty years. For a time is a year, and a time and times, and the dividing of time, or half a time, are three years and a half, and three years and a half are forty-two months, and forty-two months are twelve hundred and sixty

days, and twelve hundred and sixty days, in the prophetic style, are one thousand two hundred and sixty years. From all these cases and characters it may be fairly concluded that the time of the Church's great affliction, and of the reign of Antichrist, will be a period of one thousand two hundred and sixty years.

§ 5. "To fix the time exactly when these twelve hundred and sixty years begin, and consequently when they will end, is a matter of some niceness and difficulty; and perhaps we must see their conclusion before we can possibly ascertain their beginning. It is plain, however, that these twelve hundred and sixty years of the reign of Antichrist are not to be computed from his birth, or infancy, or youth; but from his coming to maturity, from his coming to the throne: and in my opinion the beginning cannot be fixed consistent with the truth of history, either sooner or later than the eighth century. Several memorable events happened in that century. In the year 727, the pope and people of Rome revolted from the exarch of Ravenna, and shook off their allegiance to the Greek emperor. In the year 755, the pope obtained the exarchate of Ravenna for himself, and thenceforwards acted as an absolute temporal prince. In the year 774, the pope, by the assistance of Charles the Great, became possessed of the kingdom of the Lombards. In the year 787, the worship of images was fully established, and the supremacy of the pope acknowledged by the second council of Nice. From one or the other of these transactions it is probable that the beginning of the reign of Antichrist is to be dated. What appears to be most probable is, that it is to be dated from the year 727, when Rome and the Roman dukedom came from the Greeks to the Roman pontiff. Hereby he became, in some measure, a horn or temporal prince; though his power was not fully established till some years afterwards; and before he was a horn at all, he could not answer the character of

the little horn. If, then, the beginning of the 1260 years of the reign of Antichrist is to be dated from the year 727, their end will fall near the year 2000 after Christ; and at the end of the six thousandth year of the world, according to a very early tradition of the Jews and Christians, and even of heathens, great change and revolutions are expected, both in the natural and moral world; and 'there remaineth,' according to the words of the apostle, 'a Sabbatism, or holy rest for the people of God.' Heb. 4:9."

§ 6. On Revelation, 19:11–21, he says, "In a word, the design of this sublime and figurative description is to show the downfall of popery and the triumph of Christianity; the true word of God will prevail over superstition and idolatry; all the powers of Antichrist shall be completely subdued; and the religion of Rome, as well as Rome herself, shall be destroyed." Again he says, "After the destruction of the beast and the false prophet, there still remains 'the dragon,' who had delegated his power to them, that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, he that is bound by 'an angel,' an especial minister of Providence; and the famous millennium commences, or the reign of saints upon earth for a thousand years. Wickedness being restrained, the reign of righteousness succeeds, and the administration of justice and judgment is given to the saints of the Most High; and the martyrs and confessors of Jesus, not only those who were beheaded or suffered any kind of death under the heathen emperors, but also those who refused to comply with the idolatrous worship of the beast and of his image, are raised from the dead, and have the principal share in the felicity of Christ's kingdom upon earth. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished; so that it was a peculiar prerogative of the martyrs and confessors above the rest of mankind. This is the first resurrection, a particular resurrection preceding the general one at least a thousand years.

'Blessed and holy, too, is he who hath part in the first resurrection;' he is holy in all the senses of the word, holy as separated from the common lot of mankind, holy as endowed with all virtuous qualifications, and none but such are permitted to partake of this blessed state; on such the second death hath no power." Again he says, "Nothing is more evident than that this prophecy of the millennium, and of the first resurrection, has not yet been fulfilled, even though the resurrection be taken in a figurative sense. For, reckon the thousand years, with Usher, from the time of Christ, or reckon them, with Grotius, from the time of Constantine, yet neither of these periods, nor indeed any other, will answer the description and character of the millennium, the purity and peace, the holiness and happiness of that blessed state. That there shall be such a happy period as the millennium; that the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; Dan. 7:27, that Christ shall have the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, Ps. 2:8; that the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea, Isa. 11:9; 'that the fullness of the Gentiles shall come in, and all Israel shall be saved.' Rom. 11:25, 26; in a word, that the kingdom of heaven shall be established upon earth is the plain and express doctrine of Daniel and all the prophets, as well as of St. John; and we daily pray for the accomplishment of it in praying, 'Thy kingdom come.' But of all the prophets, St. John is the only one who hath declared particularly, and in express terms, that the martyrs shall rise to partake of the felicities of this kingdom, and that it shall continue upon earth a thousand years: and the Jewish Church before him, and the Christian Church after him, have farther believed and taught, that these thousand years will be the seventh millenary of the world.

§ 7. "Of the Jewish writers, Rabbi Ketiner, as cited in the Gemera, or gloss of their Talmud, said that 'the world endures six thousand years, and one thousand it shall be laid waste, (that is, the enemies of God shall be destroyed;) whereof it is said, Isa. 3: 11, 'The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.' Tradition asserts to Rabbi Kenina; as out of seven years, every seventh is the year of remission, so out of the seven thousand years of the world, the seventh millenary shall be the millenary of remission, that God alone may be exalted in that day. It was the tradition of the house of Elias, who lived two hundred years, or thereabouts, before Christ; and the tradition might perhaps be derived from Elias the Tishbite, that the world endures six thousand years, two thousand before the law, two thousand under the law, and two thousand under the Messiah. It is also the tradition of the house of Elias, that the just, whom God shall raise up, (meaning the first resurrection,) shall not be turned again into the dust. Now if you inquire how it shall be with the just in those thousand years, wherein the holy blessed God shall renew his world, whereof it is said, 'and the Lord shall be exalted in that day;' you must know that the holy blessed God will give them the wings, as it were, of eagles, that they may fly upon the face of the waters; when it is said in Psa. 44: 2, 'Therefore we will not fear when the earth shall be changed. But perhaps you will say, it shall be a pain and affliction to them. Not at all, for it is said, Isa. 40: 31, 'They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles.'

§ 8. "Of the Christian writers, St. Barnabas, in the first century, thus comments upon those words of Moses: 'And God made in six days the works of his hands, and he finished them on the seventh day, and he rested in it, and sanctified it. Consider, children, what that signifies, that the Lord God will finish all things in six thousand years.

For a day with him is a thousand years; as he himself testified saying, 'Behold, this day shall be as a thousand years.' Therefore, children, in six days, that is in six thousand years, shall all things be consummated. And he rested the seventh day: this signifies that when his Son shall come, and shall abolish the season of the wicked ones, and shall judge the ungodly, and shall change the sun, and the moon, and the stars, then he shall rest gloriously that seventh day. St. Barnabas, Epist. chap. 15.

"Justin Martyr, in the second century, declares the millennium to be the catholic doctrine of his time. 'I, and as many as are orthodox Christians in all respects, do acknowledge that there shall be a resurrection of the flesh, (meaning the first resurrection,) and in a thousand years Jerusalem rebuilt, and adorned and enlarged, (that is in the new Jerusalem,) as the prophets Ezekiel, and Isaiah, and others unanimously attest.' Afterwards he subjoins, 'A certain man among us, whose name was John, one of the apostles of Christ, in a revelation made to him, did prophecy that the faithful believers in Christ should live a thousand years in the new Jerusalem; and after these, should be the general resurrection and judgment.' Just. Mart. Dial. cum Tryphone. Pars Secunda, p. 301 et 308, Ed. par. Par. p. 313 et 315, Ed. Therbii.

"Tertullian, at the beginning of the third century, professeth his opinion of the kingdom promised to the saints on earth, of their resurrection for a thousand years, of their living in the new Jerusalem, and therein enjoying all spiritual delights, and of the destruction of the world and the general judgment after the thousand years. Tertul. Advers Marcion. Lib. 5, chap. 24.

"Lactantius, at the beginning of the fourth century, is very copious upon this subject, in the seventh book of his divine institutions. He saith, 'Because all the works of God were finished in six days, it is necessary that the world should

remain in this state six ages, that is six thousand years.' And again, because, having finished the work, he rested on the seventh day, and blessed it; it is necessary, at the end of the six thousandth year, all wickedness should be abolished out of the earth, and justice should reign for a thousand years; he saith, when the Son of God shall have destroyed injustice, and shall have restored the just to life, he shall be conversant among men a thousand years, and shall rule them with most just government. At the same time the prince of devils shall be bound with chains, and shall be in custody the thousand years of the heavenly kingdom, while justice shall reign in the world, lest he should attempt any evil against the people of God. He saith, when the thousand years of the kingdom, that is seven thousand years, shall draw towards a conclusion, Satan shall be loosed again, and when the thousand years shall be completed, then shall be that public resurrection of all, wherein the unjust shall be raised to everlasting torments. And having enlarged upon these topics, he concludes, 'This is the doctrine of the holy prophets, which we Christians follow; this is our wisdom.' In short, the doctrine of the millennium was generally believed in the three first and purest ages; and this belief, as the learned Dodwell has justly observed, was one principal cause of the fortitude of the primitive Christians; they even coveted martyrdom, in hopes of being partakers of the privileges and glories of the martyrs of the first resurrection.

§ 9. "After the expiration of the thousand years, Rev. 20: 7–10, the restraint shall be taken off from wickedness, and for 'a little season,' as it is said before, ver. 3, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and make one effort more to establish his kingdom.

"The nations whom he shall deceive are distinguished by the name of 'Gog and Magog,' and are said to be as numerous as the sand of the sea. 'Gog and Magog' seem to

have been formerly the general name of the northern nations of Europe and Asia, as the Scythians have been since, and the Tartars are at present. In Ezekiel, there is a famous prophecy concerning Gog and Magog, and this prophecy alludes to that in many particulars. Both that of Ezekiel and that of St. John remain yet to be fulfilled; and therefore we cannot be absolutely certain that they may not both relate to the same event, but it appears more probable that they relate to different events. The one is expected to take effect before, but the other will not take effect till after the millennium. Gog and Magog, in Ezekiel, are said expressly, 38: 6, 15. 39: 2, to come from the north quarters and the north parts; but in St. John, they come from the four quarters, or corners of the earth. Gog and Magog, in Ezekiel, bend their forces against the Jews re-settled in their own land; but, in St. John, they march up against the saints and church of God in general. Gog and Magog, in Ezekiel, are with very good reason supposed to be Turks; but the Turks are the authors of the second wo, and the second wo, chap. 11: 14, is passed before the third wo, and the third wo long precedes the time here treated of. Ezekiel's prophecy apparently coincides with the latter part of the eleventh chapter of Daniel, and presignifies the destruction of the Ottoman empire, which includes Gomer and many European, as well as Ethiopia, Lybia, and other nations. If Gog and Magog, in St. John, are the same with those in Ezekiel, then we must suppose the Ottoman empire to subsist throughout the millennium, which can hardly be believed, as it can hardly be reconciled with other prophecies. It may therefore be concluded that Gog and Magog, as well as Sodom, and Egypt, and Babylon, are mystic names in this book; and the last enemies of the Christian church are so denominated, because Gog and Magog appear to be the last enemies of the Jewish nation. Who they shall be we cannot pretend to say, with the least degree of certainty.

Wherever they shall be, they shall come up from the four corners of the earth, on the breadth of the earth, and shall compass the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city, the new Jerusalem, with the saints encamped around it, as the Israelites encamped around the tabernacle in the wilderness. But they shall not succeed and prosper in their attempts; they shall not be able to hurt the church and city of God, but shall be destroyed in an extraordinary manner by fire from heaven; and the devil himself, the promoter and leader of this new apostacy and rebellion against God and his Christ, shall not only be confined as before, but he shall be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where he shall be punished, together with the beast and the false prophet, who were cast in before him, and shall be tormented day and night, for ever and ever.

"After this last conflict, and the final defeat of Satan, then follows the resurrection and judgment." Rev. 20: 11–15.

In his recapitulation of the prophecies relating to Popery, the Bishop says, "Sobriety and modesty are required in the interpretations of all prophecies, and especially in the explication of things yet future. Only this much it may be proper to premise, that having seen so many of the prophecies fulfilled, you have the less reason to doubt of the completion of those which are to follow.

§ 10. "According to the method and order wherein St. John hath arranged these events, they must happen before the end of the second wo, or the fall of the Ottoman empire. Ezekiel, 28 and 29, and Daniel, 11: 44, 45, have given some intimation that the Ottoman empire shall be overthrown, in opposing the settlement of Israel in their own land, in the latter days. In the conclusion of the book of Daniel there are also some intimations that the religion of Mohammed shall prevail in the east for as long a period of time as the tyranny of the little horn in the west. Very remarkable too it is, that Mohammed first contrived his imposture in the year 606,

the very same year wherein the tyrant Phocas made a grant of the supremacy to the Pope; and this might incline one to think that the 1260 years of the reign of Antichrist are to be dated from this time. But though they might rise together, yet they were not fully established together. The authority of Mohammed might be fully established in the 7th century; but that of the Pope was not till the eighth century; and therefore as the one was established somewhat sooner, so it may also be subverted somewhat sooner than the other. The Pope, indeed, was established supreme in spirituals in the seventh century, but he became not a temporal horn or beast till the eighth century.

§ 11. "About the time of the fall of the Ottoman empire, and of the Christian Antichrist, the Jews shall turn to the Lord and be restored to their own land. Innumerable are the prophecies concerning the conversion and restoration of the people. See Hosea, 3: 45. Ezek. 38: 21, 25. 39: 28, 29. Rom. 11: 25. Now these and like predictions, we suppose, will take effect, and this great revolution be accomplished about the time of the fall of the Ottoman empire and of the Christian Antichrist. Ezekiel's Gog and Magog, 38: 39, we believe to be the Turks or Ottomans, and they shall come up against the children of Israel in the latter days, to oppose their resettlement in their own land; and they shall fall in some extraordinary manner upon the mountains, they and the people that are with them: so the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day and forward. Daniel too, 11: 45. 12: 1, predicts the fall of the king of the north upon the glorious mountain: and at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince who standeth for the children of Israel. The restoration of the Jews and the fall of Antichrist shall also happen about the same time. In consequence of, and conformity to this doctrine, a tradition hath prevailed among

the Jews, that the destruction of Rome and the redemption of Israel shall fall out about the same time.

§ 12. "When these great events, I say, shall come to pass, then shall the kingdom of Christ commence, or the reign of the saints upon earth. So Daniel expressly informs us, that the kingdom of Christ and the saints will be raised upon the ruins of the kingdom of Antichrist. 7 : 26, 27. So likewise St. John saith, that upon the final destruction of the beast and the false prophet, Rev. 20, Satan is bound for a thousand years. It is, I conceive, to these great events, the fall of Antichrist, the re-establishment of the Jews, and the beginning of the glorious millennium, that the three different dates of twelve hundred and sixty years, twelve hundred and ninety years, and thirteen hundred and thirty-five years, are to be referred: and as Daniel saith, 12 : 12, 'Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the 1335 years.' So St. John saith, 'Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection.' Blessed and happy indeed will be this period; and it is very observable that the martyrs and professors of Jesus in popish, as well as in pagan times, will be raised to partake of this felicity. Then shall all those gracious promises in the Old Testament be fulfilled, of the amplitude and extent of the peace and prosperity of the glory and happiness of the church in the latter days. Then, in the full sense of the words. Rev, 11 : 15, 'shall the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.' According to tradition, these thousand years of the reign of Christ and the saints will be the seventh millenary of the world: for, as God created the world in six days, and rested on the seventh, so the world, it is argued, will continue six thousand years, and the seventh thousand will be the great Sabbatism, or holy rest to the people of God; 'one day, 2 Pet. 3 : 8, being with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.'

§ 13. "Prudence, as well as modesty, requires that we should forbear all curious inquiries into the nature and condition of this future kingdom; as how Satan should be bound for a thousand years, and afterwards loosed again; how the raised saints shall dwell with the living, and judge and govern the world; how Christ shall manifest himself to them, and reign among them; how the new Jerusalem, the city and church of the living God, shall descend from heaven to earth; how Satan shall at last deceive the nations, and what nations they shall be. These are points which the Holy Spirit hath not thought fit to explain; and folly may easily ask more questions about them than wisdom can answer." Farewell.

Letter II.

INTRODUCTION CONTINUED.

Dear Brother Benjamin,

Let me invite your patient attention to a few more extracts on the subject of the millennium.

§ 1. The Rev. G. S. Faber, who published, in the commencement of this century, "A dissertation on the prophecies relative to the 1260 years," in two volumes, closes the whole with the following recapitulation: "From what has been said, we learn that the 1260 days are the appointed hour of the powers of darkness, the space of time allotted for the prevalence both of popery and Mohammedanism, and for the short-lived triumph of Antichrist.

"In the year 606, the saints seem to have been first given, by the secular power of the Roman empire, into the hand of the papal little horn; consequently, from this year the 1260 days ought most probably to be computed. The desolating *transgression* of the Mohammedan little horn, however, is destined to prevail during the same space of time that the papal little horn is permitted to reign. Hence, in order that the two periods of 1260 years each might be made to synchronize together, it seemed necessary that the desolating transgression of Mohammedanism should first make its appearance in the very year when the saints were delivered into the hand of the papal little horn. Accordingly we find that it did first make its appearance in that year, for the year 606 is the most proper date of the Mohammedan imposture, because in that year Mohammed first retired to the cave of Hera.

§ 2. "The papal horn arose, as we have seen, at the precise time when Daniel predicted that it should rise; namely, while the Roman empire was falling asunder, and while ten independent kingdoms were springing up out of its ruins. It arose gradually and almost imperceptibly, among and behind the ten horns of the fourth beast; three of which were successively eradicated before it, and, by their fall, gave it an opportunity of becoming a temporal, no less than a spiritual power. For some time after its rise it was only an ecclesiastical kingdom; but that kingdom, though small at first, continued perpetually to increase in size; till, in the year 606, when the Pope was declared universal Bishop and supreme head of the Catholic church, it became a mighty ecclesiastical empire. At this era, which seems to be the proper date of the 1260 years, an epoch when the old Pagan Roman beast, which had been mortally wounded by the sword of the Spirit under his sixth head, revived, under the same sixth head, by setting a spiritual tyrant in the church, and by relapsing

into idolatry. St. John first introduces upon the stage the power which Daniel symbolizes by the little horn of the fourth beast. The power, however, had now become an universal empire, instead of being what it had hitherto been, a limited ecclesiastical kingdom. Hence the apostle, instead of representing the ten-horned beast as having likewise a little horn, describes him as attended by a second beast, whose character precisely answers to that of the little horn. By the instigation of the corrupt spiritual power, the ten-horned beast, or the secular Roman empire, wages war with the saints during the period of the 1260 days, through the instrumentality either of his last head or his ten horns.

§ 3. "The desolating transgressions of Mohammedanism arose in the same year that the papal horn became an universal spiritual empire. A few years after its rise, it acquired its predicted character of a little horn of the Macedonian he-goat; and soon, agreeably to the prophecy, waxed exceedingly great toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. In the course of its progress, it cast down many of the symbolical stars, or Christian pastors, to the ground; took away the daily sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; polluted the spiritual sanctuary; and presumed to magnify itself against even the Prince of princes. As for its character, it was notorious for trampling upon the truth; for prospering in a wonderful manner; for making its appearance exactly when the transgressors were come to the full, by publicly re-establishing idolatry; for teaching dark sentences; for being mighty not through its own unaided power; for exterminating its opponents with the utmost barbarity; for persecuting with peculiar violence the people of the Holy Ones; for advancing itself by craft, and for destroying many while in a state of negligent security.

"In the Apocalypse a more full account is given of the

agents by whom this apostate religion should be propagated. A fallen star opens the bottomless pit and lets out the destroying king of the locusts. These locusts are permitted to continue their ravages during the space of five prophetic months, or 150 years, which is found from history to be the precise period allotted to the continuation of the Saracenic incursions. The locusts are succeeded by an immense body of horsemen under four leaders, from the banks of the Euphrates, whose commission is limited to an hour, a day, a month, and a year, or 391 years and 15 days, and who are empowered to kill a third part of men, or the Roman empire, which their predecessors, the Saracenic locusts, had only been permitted to torment.

"History accordingly teaches us that the Saracens were succeeded by the Turks; who came under four leaders from the banks of the Euphrates; whose armies consisted almost entirely of cavalry; whose career of conquest exactly continued 391 years; and who subverted the Constantinopolitan empire, which the Saracens, severely as they harassed it, had never been able to effect.

"The Mohammedan little horn itself, or the religion of Mohammed, is to prevail to the end of 2200 years from the invasion of Asia by Alexander the Great, which is found to bring us down exactly to the year 1866, and thus to allow precisely 1260 years for the triumphs of Mohammedanism, reckoning from its commencement in the year 606.

§ 4. "After the era of the Reformation, and in the last days of atheism and insubordination, but previous to the commencement of the time of the end, the infidel king, according to the sure word of prophecy, was destined to arise; that Antichrist who was alike to deny the Father and the Son; that audacious tyrant who should magnify himself above every god; who should speak marvelous things against the God of gods; who should neither regard the God of his fathers nor the desire of women; who should

nevertheless honor a foreign god, and acknowledge gods protectors; and who should be allowed to prosper till the indignation be accomplished.

"As the contemporary rise and progress of popery and Mohammedanism is described in the Apocalypse under the two first wo trumpets, so the appearance of the great Antichrist is announced by the third. His full developement, however, is to be immediately preceded by the last event of the second wo trumpet, a tremendous earthquake, by which a tenth part of the great Latin city, or one of the ten horns of the Roman beast, is to be overthrown. The last wo, which extends beyond the termination of the 1260 years, at least to the end of the seventh vial, if not to the commencement of the millennium, comprehends the periods of the harvest and the vintage.

"Thus, after the epoch of the Reformation, and immediately after the French Revolution of the year 1789, we have seen the manifestation of a terrific monster which alike set at defiance the laws both of God and man. We have beheld scenes of carnage and impiety which well deserve to be ushered in by a distinct wo trumpet, and which may justly claim to themselves the title of the harvest of God's wrath. The scenes have at last passed away, like the distempered and fantastic vision of a sick man; and the sun of military tyranny has begun to scorch the irreclaimable inhabitants of the Papal Roman empire with an intolerable heat. The fatness of the harvest, therefore, is past; and we must expect in due season the commencement of the vintage, in which the enemies of God will be finally destroyed for ever.

§ 5. "At present we are living under the fourth vial; and from the great length of time which popery and Mohammedanism have continued, we cannot be very far removed from the end of the 1260 days, whatever be the precise year from which they ought to be dated. The year which I have

fixed upon for their date, is the year 606, a year marked by so singular a combination of circumstances, that I know not how any other can with equal propriety be selected. If, then, I be right in my opinion, we are now but removed a little more than sixty years from the commencement of the time of the end, and of the vintage of God's wrath. Be this, however, as it may, we are undoubtedly living in the last days of blasphemous infidelity, in that awful period which is the peculiar reign of Antichrist. The signs of the times all concur to teach us that we are fast approaching towards the catastrophe of the great drama. We have seen the unexpected union of infidelity and popery; an union, no doubt, preparatory to the predicted final league of the beast, the false prophet, and the kings of the papal earth. We have seen measures taken, as it were, towards making the atheistical king the last head of the beast. We have seen Palestine, the predicted stage on which Antichrist and his congregated vassals are doomed to perish, brought forward in a remarkable manner to public notice, and becoming at once a subject of political discussion and an object of hostile invasion. We have seen the kings devouring the flesh of the great whore, and making her naked and desolate, though her spiritual empire over the minds of men still continues. We have seen, and we may now see the waters of the mystic Euphrates rapidly drying up previous to their final complete exhaustion under the sixth vial. And we have seen of late years, what I cannot but consider at least as one of the minor signs of the times, an unusual and humble attention paid in this Protestant country to the predictions of the ancient prophets. Although the book be sealed, and will not be fully understood till the time of the end, yet as the time is now approaching, many run to and fro, and knowledge is increased. Of the wicked indeed, of those who are either members of the great apostacy, or have been tainted with the blasphemous impieties

of Antichrist, none shall understand but the spiritually wise children of the symbolical manna, they who profess the same evangelical principles as those who perished at the era of the Reformation, who were tried in purging, and in making white their apostate brethren, these shall understand.

§ 6. "As yet we have not beheld any signs of the restoration of Judah, nor, to all appearances, shall we behold any, till the three times and a half draw very near to their termination.

"But when that famous period shall have expired, then will commence the wars of Antichrist with the kings of the south and the north, and the restoration of the unconverted Jews through his instrumentality. Then will the Lord call unto the land spreading wide the shadow of its wings, which are beyond the river Cush, accustomed to send messengers by sea, even in quick-sailing vessels, upon the surface of the waters. Then shall the swift messengers go unto a nation dragged away and plucked, unto a people wonderful from the beginning hitherto—a nation expecting, expecting, and trampled under foot, whose land rivers have spoiled. Then shall all the inhabitants of the world, and the dwellers upon earth see the lifting up, as it were, of a hammer upon the mountains, and shall hear the sounding, as it were, of a trumpet. In spite of the opposition of the atheistico-papal confederacy, the great maritime power of the day shall take the lead in the restoration of the converted of Judah, while the enemies of the Lord, notwithstanding their invasion of Palestine, and notwithstanding their temporary success against Jerusalem, bent only upon the accomplishment of their own schemes, and unconsciously subject to the influence of Satanical delusion, shall madly rush on to their destruction in the valley of Megiddo, in the region between the two seas, the region whose limits extend sixteen hundred furlongs."

§ 7. It might probably be expected that I should now state the sentiments of our own brethren on the subject of the coming of the Messiah; but you know, my dear Benjamin, that having so often been disappointed in their expectation, they have at last pronounced a curse on every one who should attempt to calculate the time or the end. Tal. Sanhedrim, c. 11.

There have, however, been many (some of which have been referred to before) who have from time to time fixed the time of his coming, but have all failed. A full account of these calculations may be seen in Wagenseil's Tela Ignea Lat. p. 614–629. In *Sephor Avcoth Rochel* there are ten signs laid down by which Messiah's advent may be known. The seventh sign is the rise of one whom they call Armillus; but Christians, they say, call him Antichrist, who shall lead multitudes to worship him as God; and the Jews refusing to do so, will lead to a great battle, in which Armillus will lose about twenty thousand of his army: his wrath being now kindled more than ever, he will gather the forces of all the nations of the world into the valley of *Decision*. Joel, 3 : 14.

At that period, all the nations of the world will expel all the Israelites out of their provinces, and not suffer them to dwell among them any more; and they will say, Behold the despised and abject people, who have rebelled against us and appointed themselves a king. And Israel shall experience distress, such as had never been known from the beginning of the world even to that time: then Michael shall stand up to purge out the impious from Israel, as it is said, "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as there never was since there was a nation." Dan. 11 : 1. Immediately all the Israelites will flee away into desert places; and all who are hesitating and doubtful in their hearts will return

to the Gentiles, and will say, Is this the redemption which we expected, that the Messiah himself has been slain? Of that redemption, therefore, will all be ashamed, who shall disregard it, and cleave to the Gentiles. Thus will God prove all Israel, and purge them like gold and silver; as it is written, "And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried." Zech. 13 : 9. Again: "And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me." Ezek. 20 : 38. Again: "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly." Dan. 13 : 10. All the rest of Israel shall be holy and pure in the desert of Judah—for forty-five days' grazing and eating nettles, and plucking the leaves of herbs and shrubs. In them shall be fulfilled this prophecy: "Therefore will I allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her." Hosea, 2 : 13. That this time will be a period of forty-five days, is evident from what is written: "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination which maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days." The words immediately following are: "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." Dan. 12 : 11, 12. From the end of the former period to the end of the latter are forty-five days: in the interval all the impious Israelites, who are not worthy to see the redemption, will die: Armillus will come, and conquer, and take possession of Egypt; for it is said, "And the land of Egypt shall not escape." Dan. 11 : 42. Then he shall turn his face towards Jerusalem, to lay it waste a second time; for it is said, "And he shall plant the tabernacle of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him." Dan. 11 : 45. page 51–54.

Eighth sign.—Michael shall arise and blow a trumpet three times, as it is said: "In that day the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish." Isa. 27 : 13. It is also written: "The Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with the whirlwinds of the south." Zech. 9 : 14. At the first blast shall be revealed Messiah Ben David and Elijah the prophet; at whose sign the just and the pure Israelites, who had fled into the desert of Judah, at the end of the forty-five days shall recover their spirits, their hands which hung down shall be strengthened, and their feeble knees confirmed; and on hearing the sound of the trumpet, all the rest of the Israelites throughout the world will know that God has visited his people, and granted perfect deliverance. They will, therefore, gather together and come, as it is said, "And they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt." Isa. 27 : 13. But that blast shall cause fear and trembling in the Gentiles, and they shall be seized with the most grievous diseases. In the meantime the Israelites shall prepare themselves to go forth; and Messiah Ben David and Elijah the prophet shall come, with the just who shall return from the desert of Judah, and with all the assembled Israelites, and will enter into Jerusalem; and the Son of David going up into the deserted palace, will there fix his residence. But when Armillus shall have heard that there has arisen a King in Israel, he will say, How long shall that most vile and abject nation cause trouble! and collecting the forces of all the nations of the world, he will come to fight with God's Messiah, whom God will not send into the war, but will only say to him, "Sit thou at my right hand." Psa. 110 : 1. And he will say to Israel, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show you to-day." Exod. 14 : 13. Immediately God himself will fight with their enemies, as it is said, "Then

shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle." Zech. 14 : 3. And God will rain down fire and brimstone from heaven, as it is written, "And I will plead against him with pestilence, and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire and brimstone." Ezek. 38 : 22. And there shall the impious Armillus perish, with his whole army, and all the impious who destroyed the house of our God and carried us away from our own land. In that very hour will Israel take vengeance on them; for it is said, "And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble." Obadiah, 18. p. 79–81.

Ninth sign.—Michael shall blow a great blast, by which the sepulchres of the dead at Jerusalem shall be opened, and the blessed God will restore them to life. Messiah Ben David also, and Elijah the prophet with him, will raise from the dead Messiah Ben Joseph, who was preserved under the gates of Jerusalem. Then they shall send Messiah Ben David to gather together the remainder of the Jews dispersed in all countries; and forthwith all the kings of the Gentiles throughout the world will take the Israelites upon their shoulders and bring them to God. p. 138.

Tenth sign.—When Michael shall have sounded again, the loudest blast, God will bring forth all the tribes from the rivers Gosan, Lachlach and Chabor, and from the cities of the Medes, an innumerable multitude, and they shall come with the children of Moses. "The land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a flame burneth." Joel, 2 : 3. And at that time, when the tribes shall go forth, the glorious clouds of the divine majesty shall surround them: the blessed God himself will go before their face, as it is said, "The breaker is come up

before them." Mica, 2 : 13. He will open to them the fountains of the tree of life, and he will drink of them in the way, as it is said, "I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." Isa. 41 : 18. It is also written: "They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them." Isa. 49 : 10. God will make us worthy to see the deliverance in a short time; he will make us worthy to see the house of his choice, the temple. He will fulfill in us what is written: "Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwelling-places: and the city shall be builded upon her own heap, and the palace shall remain after the order thereof." Jerem. 30 : 18. And he will accomplish in us all his consolations and assurances promised by his prophets; "And at that time will I bring you, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth." Zeph. 3 : 20. p. 142, 143.

§ 8. On the other hand also, there are ten kinds of consolations and assurances in which God causes Israel to trust: and as the root of those consolations, which are as branches proceeding from it, the first is—the coming of the Redeemer; for it is said, "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee." Zech. 9 : 9. The second—the gathering together of the captives; for it is said, "Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame." Jerem. 31 : 18. What is meant by the "lame and the blind?" This teaches us, that every one of the just will return in the same state in which he departed out of this life. He who was blind, will return to life blind; he who was lame, will return to life lame: and so they will be raised with all their blemishes in order that every one shall be able to recognize his companion, that no one may say they are other persons: but

afterwards God will cure them, according to that passage: "Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing." Isa. 35:6. The third—the resurrection of the dead, as it is written: "And many of them that slept in the dust of the earth shall awake." Dan. 12:2. The fourth—the building of the temple, according to the vision of Ezekiel in his prophecy. The fifth—the reign of Israel from sea to sea, over the whole earth, as it is said "For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish." Isa. 9:12. And the whole earth shall return to the judgment of God, and to his law, according to the prophecy: "Then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord." Zeph. 3:9. The sixth—that God will destroy all his enemies, and take vengeance upon them, as it is said: "And I will lay my vengeance upon Edom." Ezek. 25:14. The seventh—that God will take away from Israel all disease, and every plague, according to the prophecy: "And the inhabitants shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be delivered from iniquity." Isa. 23:24. The eighth—that God will prolong the days of the Israelites like those of a tree, according to the prophecy: "As the days of a tree shall be the days of my people." Isa. 45:22. It is also written: "For the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner, being an hundred years old, shall be accursed." Isa. 65:20. It is also written, "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces." Isa. 25:8. The ninth—that God will manifest himself to Israel face to face; for it is said: "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." Isa. 40:5. He will also make all Israelites prophets, as it is said: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy." Joel, 2:28. The tenth—God will take away from Israel the evil

principle and all evil language, as it is said: "And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh." Ezek. 11: 19. The wars of the Messiah are ended. "Harden" not "our hearts from thy fear." Isa. 63: 17, p. 158, 160.

§ 9. Pardon me, my dear Benjamin, for having detained you so long. I will now close this introduction with a very brief statement of the sentiments of *Joseph Crool*, one of our nation, and Hebrew teacher at Cambridge University, in England: "By sin," says he, "man has become a fallen creature, and will continue so for six thousand years, according to the days of the creation of the world, but no longer; at the end, or near to it, the Messiah shall come, and there will be a new world. The old world shall be restored to its former glory, a new heaven and a new earth will appear, the former shall pass away, mankind will recover the primitive glory, and will be above angels; Satan and his band will be destroyed. The seventh day of the creation was the Sabbath, and that day only received a blessing, and was set apart for ever to be observed as a holy day; which was a type of the great Sabbath, i. e. the world of the Messiah, which also will be called the blessed world. Restor. Israel, p. 11.

"God created the world," says he, "in six days, to teach us that each day is to represent a thousand years, i. e. that this world shall exist for the space of six thousand years; the seventh day, which is called the Sabbath, represented, that after six thousand years, there should be a sabbatical time for one thousand years. This present year, 1812, we count 5571, and here we find there are yet 137 years to the time of his coming: but we know that this time will be shortened; and, according to the opinion of one great and learned Rabbi, there are only 29 years more to the time of his coming; and when we shall begin to count 5600, all

things in this world will be settled." Again he says, "By this calculation we may learn that the jubilee of the restoration of Israel has begun already, these twenty years back, i. e. just when the Revolution began in France; at that very time the seventy jubilees were at an end. There are yet thirty-six years to the end of the jubilee of Israel, and before the end of these thirty-six years, Israel will be restored, and the Messiah will take possession of his empire."

The Lord will hasten it in his time. Amen.

Farewell.

Letter III.

THE RESTORATION OF THE JEWS.

My Dear Benjamin,

From the statement in the preceding letters, which comprises the sentiments of many writers, both Jewish and Christian, on the subject of the second advent of Christ, or the millennium, it appears that a certain chain of events is to take place; and although the things which relate to the circumstances, the time when, and the means and instruments by which the predicted events are to be brought about, cannot be known with certainty, yet when we shall see the accomplishment of the first, we may confidently look for the appearance of the next event. For more than thirty years, my dear Benjamin, I have studied this subject as much as my other avocations would permit, and from what I have been able to gather, both from the Holy Bible, from the writings of man, and from the dispensations of God's

providence, I now venture, but with the greatest diffidence and deepest humility, to submit to you my feeble thoughts on this profound subject; not for the purpose of entering into a controversy with any one who may differ, but merely for your consideration, to adopt or reject them as you may think them most agreeable to the revealed will of God.

§ 1. The events to follow each other are probably these:

1. The way will be prepared for the return of our people to their own land.

2. They will return as a nation in an unconverted state.

3. They will rebuild Jerusalem and the temple, and re-establish Judaism for a season.

4. A considerable number of our brethren will be converted, but not return with our nation.

5. These will afterwards be carried in vessels of bulrushes to our people, and be the means of leading them to declare themselves an independent nation.

6. This will cause Jerusalem to be besieged by the eastern and the western antichrist.

7. Jesus Christ shall then appear personally and visibly.

8. The effect of this appearance will be two-fold; the destruction of the enemy, or the battle of Armageddon, on the one hand, and the conversion of our nation on the other.

9. The ten tribes will then return and be re-united with Judah.

10. The first resurrection will take place.

11. Satan will be bound for a thousand years.

12. During this period Christ will reign personally upon the earth, and the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall fill the whole earth.

These twelve events will probably happen within the space of 75 years, the portion of time between the 1260 and the 1335 years mentioned by Daniel, and about the middle of the 75 years the eighth event may be expected.

13. After this, Satan shall be let loose, make war with the saints, and be cast into the lake of fire.

14. Then comes the general judgment.

You see, my dear Benjamin, what a large field for discussion these different topics present to our view. It would by far exceed my limits to consider each and all of them in the preceding order.

I will therefore select two or three of the principal points, and include some of the rest, and will first call your attention to the,

§ 2. Restoration of our people, i. e. both Judah and his companions, and Ephraim and his companions.

An opponent to the literal restoration of the Jews says, "It is possible, we say, that the Jews may be restored to their own land, with very mistaken expectations, retaining still their carnal prejudices, rejecting the Son of David, who is come, and vainly looking for another; and that they may afterwards, by a fresh pentecostal effusion, be cured of their fatal blindness, and become obedient to the faith. The question is, what are the scriptural grounds for such an expectation?" Eclectic Review for 1829. (Third series, No. 3.)

Well, my dear Benjamin, "to the law and the prophets," and after I shall have established, from the Scriptures and other arguments, the literal restoration of our people to their own land in an unconverted state, and their conversion at the personal appearance of Christ, &c. &c. I will endeavor to answer the principal objections that have been brought against the proposed scheme. But there are two methods which have been alternately employed to evade the force of the arguments in the passages I shall quote, which evasions I shall endeavor to notice as I go along. These methods are, either that the prophecy has been already fulfilled, or that it is to be understood in an allegorical sense, and to be applied either to the spiritual conversion of the Jews, or to the conversion of Gentiles, the spiritual Israel.

§ 3. A judicious writer in the Jewish Expositor says. "They have generally applied the prophecies relating to the

restoration of the Jews, and the ten tribes, and the consequent happy state of that nation, and also of the whole Christian world, which is to happen in the latter times, (and which is frequently styled in Scripture, the reign or kingdom of Christ,) to the Church of Christ, as it has hitherto subsisted in the world; applying the terms Israel, the seed of Abraham, the city of Jerusalem, in an allegorical sense to the Christians, or the Christian church in general, whenever they meet with them with a promise of great happiness annexed; whereas the great happiness, which is the principal subject of all the Old Testament prophets, appears to me to be no way applicable to any state of Christianity that has ever yet existed, but to relate to the conversion and restoration of the literal Israel, the Jews, and the ten tribes, in the latter times, and to that reign of Christ when the Church shall be triumphant."

Another writer observes, "The Gentile takes up his station on Gerizim, and engrossing all its blessings, consigns its original occupants to the possession of the curse of Ebal. The Gentile, enjoying the figure, overlooks a literal fulfillment to the Jews. Canaan is transferred to his own bosom, or placed in heaven above, *any where* but in the *land of Canaan*." Christian Spectator, 1826, p. 514.

Another says, "We would ask our spiritualizing interpreters what they would have to offer with respect to this prophecy?" (alluding to Ezek. 36: 1–5, 8, 12.) "Without doubt, spiritualizing will boldly affirm that the prediction which Ezekiel addresses to the mountains of Israel, contains nothing about their return to their own land,—as the papists maintain that after the consecration of the wafer, nothing of real substance remains, but it is really and substantially transubstantiated into the body of Christ, although they cannot deny that the outward appearance continues to be that of a wafer. So these persons, taking a bold flight in allegory, will tell us that the mountains, hills, rivers, valleys,

desolate wastes, and cities of Israel in the prophecy, are to be understood of the Christian church among the Gentiles; and that the return of the children of Israel to those places only means their conversion to Christ." Ibi

§ 4. I will now proceed to show from the Scriptures, that the Jews, as a nation, will return again to the literal Canaan before their conversion. There is scarcely any thing more frequently foretold than this glorious event. To quote all the passages relating to it would be an endless task, I shall therefore select but a few as a specimen. We will begin with Moses. "And I will bring the land into desolation; and your enemies that dwell therein shall be astonished at it: and I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you; and your land shall be desolate and your cities waste. Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land. The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her Sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity; because, even because they despised my judgments, and their soul abhorred my statutes." Lev. 26: 32, 33, 42–45. In the preceding verses God threatens judgments to overtake our nation for their sins and disobedience to his law; and then promises that he will not utterly destroy them, but remember his covenant made with our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which covenant reads thus: "And the Lord said unto Abraham, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever." Gen. 13: 14, 15.

§ 5. The learned Dr. Mede, in his answer to Dr. Swift's fourth letter, gives the following explanation of this

text, which deserves particular notice: "I doubt not," says he, "but you have felt some scruple (as well as others) at our Savior's demonstration of the resurrection in the Gospel. Matt. 22; Mark, 13. God said to Moses in the bush, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.' Ergo, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob must one day rise again from the dead. How does this conclusion follow? Do not the spirits of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob yet live? God should then be the God of the living, though their bodies should never rise again. Therefore some Socinians argue from this place, that the spirits of the just lie in the sleep of death until the resurrection. Or, might not the Sadducees have replied, the meaning to be of what God had been, not of what he should be, viz. That he was that God who had once chosen their fathers, and had made a covenant with them; 'I am the Lord that brought Abraham out of Chaldea, who appeared to Isaac and Jacob whilst they lived,' &c. But how would this then make for the resurrection? Surely it doth. He that could not err said it. Let us see therefore how it may.

"I say, therefore, the words must be understood with a supply of that they have reference to, which is the covenant which the Lord made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in respect whereof he calls himself their God. This covenant was to give unto them and to their seed the land wherein they were strangers; (mark it) not their seed, or offspring only, but to themselves.

"To Abraham, Gen. 13 : 15, and 17 : 8. To Isaac, Gen. 26 : 3. To Jacob, Gen. 35 : 12. To all three, Exod. 6 : 4, 8. Deut. 1 : 8. 11 : 21, and 30 : 20. If God then make good to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, this his covenant, whereby he undertook to be their God; then they must needs one day live again to inherit the promised land, which hitherto they have not done. For the God that has

covenanted with them, covenanted not to make his promise good to them dead, but living. This is the strength of the divine argument, and irrefragable; which otherwise would not infer any such conclusion."

Now, as the essence of the covenant made with our fathers and their *natural* posterity, was the possessing the land of Canaan literally, and as the Lord has promised he will remember the covenant during their captivity, it must mean that he will bring them again into the *literal Canaan.* What else can be the meaning of these words, "and I will remember the land," but this, that God would put an end to its desolation, by restoring it to its ancient inhabitants, to be cultivated and replenished by them.

§ 6. It is a poor evasion, to say that this promise was fulfilled at their return from Babylon, because the restoration to their own land for a few ages, and a subsequent dispersion, for near four times as long a period, among all nations, without any hopes of return, can never be the true meaning of giving that land to the seed of Abraham *for ever.* Besides, it has justly been observed, "that it is not unusual for the same thing (the passover for instance) to refer immediately to one event; and remotely to another; so it is common for a prophecy to have a partial fulfillment in something at, or near the time, and a more perfect one at some distant period. God's works being whole, and the end seen from the beginning, there is often a dignified analogy between them; system, as it were, within system; one train of events making way for another, and furnishing an earnest of its fulfillment. Thus the kingdom of the Messiah is manifestly predicted in the 72d Psalm, though it is mostly under the form of the prosperous reign of Solomon."

Mr. Faber, speaking of the prophecy in Joel, says, "This is applied by St. Peter to the effusion of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, though strictly relating to the era of the restoration of the Jews, and the glorious period of

the millennium. The first advent of Christ is frequently considered by the inspired writers as a sort of type of his second advent; whence we find that predictions which properly belong to the one period, are often applied by anticipation to the other. Thus, in a similar manner, the apostles apply the prophecy of David in the second Psalm, to the conspiracy of the chief princes with Herod and Pontius Pilate against our Lord: yet, if any one will compare that second Psalm with the description of the Word of God routing his enemies congregated in the 19th chapter of the Apocalypse, he will be convinced that it does not receive its ultimate accomplishment till the second advent, whether literal or spiritual, at the commencement of the millennium."

In like manner in this place, as the calamities threatened were not to be inflicted at once, but gradually, and some repeatedly, as ver. 29, "Ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat;" which has literally been fulfilled in the siege of Samaria by Benhadad, (2 Kings, 6 : 28, 29;) in the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, (Sam. 4 : 10,) and in the last siege of Jerusalem by the Romans, as recorded by our own historian Josephus; so likewise the promise was to be fulfilled as often as needed; as often as they are banished from the land given by the covenant to our fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, so often shall they be restored to enjoy it, and therefore the promise is yet to be fulfilled. I wish you, my dear Benjamin, to remember this observation, as it is applicable to many other predictions, which I shall name hereafter.

§ 7. "The reader who consults the marginal references," says Dr. Scott, "will in them find the most instructive comment on this chapter; and be more and more convinced as he proceeds, that it is a kind of prophetical history of that nation, *even to this present time.*"

Again he says, ver. 31–35, "Indeed the dispersed state

of the Jews since the destruction of the temple by the Romans, more fully answers the import of the subsequent prediction than even the desolations of the Babylonish captivity." And on ver. 43–45 he says, "A glorious accomplishment of this part of the prophecy may hereafter be expected by the conversion of the Jews to Christ, and probably by their restoration to their own land; and after the fulfillment of the previous threatenings, in their present dispersion of above twelve hundred years duration, they are still most miraculously preserved a distinct people, evidently in order to this most desirable event."

§ 8. I will next call your attention to the prophecy in Deut. 30: 1–6. "And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind amongst all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice, according to all that I command thee this day, thou, and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; that then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return, and gather thee from all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee. And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." Now, that this is a prediction yet to be fulfilled in the literal restoration of our beloved people to their own land, and that afterward they shall be truly converted to God, will evidently appear, if we consider that it has never

had its fulfillment. It is inapplicable to their return from the Babylonian captivity, during which time they were very far from being scattered among "*all* people, from one end of the earth to the other." Neither can it be said that the hearts of the people were generally circumcised, so that they loved God with all their heart and all their soul, during the interval of their return from Babylon and their being scattered by Titus. For our Rabbins themselves, as well as Josephus, say that our nation, at the time of the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans, were more wicked than ever, and that therefore the coming of the Messiah was delayed until they shall repent; nor has the other promise been realized, ver. 5, "to do them good, and to multiply them above their fathers." Consider next, that as it is allowed by all, that at least many of the calamities in ch. 27–30 were inflicted literally on our nation soon after their dispersion by Titus, why should not the blessing of deliverance and restoration to the land, which "our fathers possessed, and shall possess," be literally fulfilled?

§ 9. Bp. Newton says, "The design of the work will permit us only to take notice of such (predictions) only as have some reference to the latter ages; and we will confine ourselves principally to the 28th chap. of Deuteronomy, the greatest part whereof we may see accomplished in the world at *this present time*. I know that some critics make a division of these prophecies, and imagine that one part relates to the former captivity of the Jews, and the calamities they suffered under the Chaldeans; and that the other part relates to the latter captivity of the Jews, and to the calamities they suffered under the Romans: but there is no need of any such distinctions; there is no reason to think that any such was intended by the author; several predictions on the one part, as well as on the other, have been fulfilled at both periods, but they have all more amply been fulfilling during the latter period; and there cannot be a

more lively picture than they exhibit of the state of the Jews at present." And after having pointed out in many particulars the literal fulfillment of these predictions, he observes, "Here are instances of prophecies, prophecies delivered above three thousand years ago, and yet we see them fulfilling in the world *at this very time*."

§ 10. Dr. Scott says, "All these curses, which were denounced against the Israelites when disobedient, have indeed uniformly overtaken them, in every situation, and in every country, from *that day to this;* as must be evident to every person who is in the least acquainted with their history." And on the prediction under consideration he says, "This psssage evidently refers to the prophetical denunciations of the two preceding chapters, which had their main accomplishment in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and in the consequent dispersion of the Jews to the present day; little doubt can therefore remain that these prophetical promises are yet unaccomplished, and that the relics of the nation shall, in some future, if not very distant period, be converted to Christ, and probably be gathered together and re-instated in Canaan. The language here used is in great measure *absolute*, not containing merely *a conditional encouragement*, but *predicting an event* which would absolutely take place: for the Lord himself engaged 'to circumcise the hearts' of the people; and when regeneration has taken place, and divine love has supplanted the love of sin, then certainly they will consider and repent, and return to God and obey him."

§ 11. From what has been said, my dear Benjamin, you will perceive that this prediction proves my proposition, that our people will return literally to the land which God gave to our fathers; and that they will return in an *unconverted* state; for the circumcision of the heart, or true conversion to God, is to succeed their restoration to the land. It is of great importance to remember this *order* es-

tablished by God himself; for you must know that there are not a few who grant that this prediction has not been fulfilled, but will be accomplished in the conversion of the Jews wherever they are; and that to be gathered to the land of Canaan, "the land which our fathers did possess," is not to be understood literally, but allegorically, of *heaven;* of which Canaan was a type. True, Canaan was a type of heaven; but does God promise to gather them "out" of all people from one end of the earth to the other, and bring them into heaven?"—what, *before* their hearts are circumcised to love him? Has Christ changed the order of things? Has it now become possible for sinners to enter the kingdom of God *without* being born of the Spirit? Consider also, that surely the land which Abraham could "see with his eyes," and "in which he was a stranger," the land in which Isaac "sojourned," the land on which Jacob "lay," must be the very land of Canaan itself, and no other place in heaven or earth. But these are the terms which the Lord employs to define the promised land, that land which he promised to the patriarchs, "and their seed for ever, for an everlasting possession." Besides, what does it mean when God adds, "I will multiply them above their fathers?" "And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers." Deut. 30: 5. Is this applicable to the inhabitants of heaven? No, my dear Benjamin, it is the Canaan once possessed, which they shall possess again.

§ 12. But let us proceed, to hear what the prophets say on this interesting subject. We begin with the 36th chapter of Ezekiel, which, after you have carefully read over, you will perceive that it contains a promise of temporal and spiritual blessings. The spiritual blessings consist in regeneration and reconciliation with God. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean;

from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them," Ezek. 36: 25–27; by the power and influence of the Holy Spirit they should be quickened and have a new nature implanted, the blood of Jesus applied to their hearts to cleanse their guilty conscience from dead works to serve the living God; and the purifying and sanctifying influence of grace, to enable them to die unto sin and live unto newness of life; and thus God would again be their God, and they should be his people. Amongst the temporal blessings promised, is, first, their return to their own land, which is to *precede* their regeneration, agreeably to the order, ver. 25; then, i. e. after having been "gathered out of all countries and brought into their own land," ver. 24, then they shall experience the change of heart promised.

§ 13. Now, whatever partial fulfillment this prophecy may have had at the return of our fathers from Babylon, it is very evident that a far more complete accomplishment of it is to take place in future. For in verse 11, the promise is that God would do better unto them than at their beginning; but it is a fact well known, that the outward condition of our people was never so prosperous after the captivity as it had been before that catastrophe. This remark is equally true with respect to their spiritual state; for, as has been observed before, that when our fathers had returned from Babylon, instead of being regenerated and reconciled to God, they rather grew worse, and crucified the Lord of glory; and instead of God's being their God, and they his people, they were cut off; the wrath of God came upon them to the uttermost, and others, who were not

the people of God, were adopted in their stead. The land, instead of being like the garden of Eden, the admiration of men, has become the habitation of owls, and the dwelling-place of wild beasts. Further, the persons to be restored are repeatedly said to have blasphemed the name of the Lord amongst the heathen; but this character is not applicable to our fathers in the Babylonish captivity; instead of being profane, they seem to have been so conscientious as not to sing the song of Zion in a strange land.

Again, in verse 12, &c. it is promised, that the land should never be bereaved of its inhabitants; but, since the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, very few of our people have lived in the land of our fathers. Further, this people is to be gathered out of all countries; but the captives of Babylon were chiefly confined to one country. This prophecy, therefore, my dear Benjamin, is in perfect unison with that of Moses, which we have considered before; and they both confirm the sentiment that our nation, however scattered in all countries, will return to the land which our fathers did possess; then, as a nation, they will be converted to God, and clothe themselves in dust and ashes; then the Lord will do them good, better than heretofore.

§ 14. On this prophecy Dr. Scott has the following notes: "The Lord declared that he would replenish the land, and not suffer it any more to be desolated, as it has been during the Babylonish captivity; and that he would not any more give the heathen occasion to reproach it. Though the whole land of Israel was not desolated after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, as it had been after that by the Chaldeans, yet the slaughter made among the Jews was far greater, and they were entirely driven out of the land, and have continued in a state of exile from it for above seventeen hundred years. It seems therefore unavoidable but that we must refer the full completion of this prophecy to some future event, when the

land shall again become fruitful, and be inhabited by the nation of Israel to the end of time.

"In allusion to the divers washings and sprinklings of the ritual law, the Lord promised to sprinkle clean water upon his people, and make them clean from all their filthiness and idols. Clean water is the universal purifier of our persons, garments, houses, streets, and cities; and, under both the Old Testament and the Christian dispensation, it hath been used as an emblem of the cleansing of our polluted souls from sin. But no water, however clean, or in what mode soever it be applied, can do more than take away the filth of the flesh; except as it is used for an outward sign of the inward spiritual grace of the Gospel. Water especially is the sacramental sign of the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit; yet this is always connected with the atoning blood of Christ. When the latter is applied to the conscience, through faith, to cleanse it from dead works, the former is always applied to all the powers of the soul, to purify them from the love and pollution of sin; and thus the sinner is washed, and sanctified, and justified in the name of our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. But of whom was this spoken? Doubtless, many of the Jews who returned from Babylon were thus renewed and sanctified; yet numbers of them continued strangers to such special blessings, though preserved from outward idolatry. These promises are pleaded by all true believers, in every age, and fulfilled to them; and this may be called the spiritual meaning. But the context speaks so expressly and repeatedly of the house of Israel being restored to the land which the Lord had given to their fathers, that, in the prophetical meaning, I apprehend it greatly confirms the opinion of those who suppose, that, after the Jews shall be converted to Christ, they shall also be restored to their own land. Then these promises will be fulfilled in them, in their fullest meaning; and the sub-

sequent part of the prophecy will be literally accomplished in the sight of all nations; and the Jews no doubt are preserved a distinct people on purpose to make way for this great display of the Lord's power and truth, and thus demonstrate to all the world the divine original of the holy Scriptures."-

"In this chapter," says Matthew Henry, "we have two distinct prophecies; the one seems chiefly to relate to the temporal estate of the Jews, wherein their present deplorable condition is described, and the triumph of their neighbors in it; but it is promised that their grievances shall all be redressed, and that in due time they shall be settled again in their own land in the midst of peace and plenty. Ver. 1–15. The other seems chiefly to concern their spiritual estate."

§ 15. There are other prophecies which will be considered hereafter, some relating to the restoration of the ten tribes, and others speaking both of Judah and Israel. The two we have now considered relate to Judah, or the two tribes dispersed by Titus. I agree, that the spiritual blessings promised in these predictions are applicable to the conversion of every sinner, whether Jew or Gentile; but the circumstances mentioned before and after the spiritual change, in ver. 25–27, ought to lead us to be just before we are charitable; i. e. we ought to apply them first *literally*, as a promise to the natural descendants of Jacob, and then use them as an *illustration* of the nature of the conversion of every other sinner. The persons to whom the promise primarily belongs, are such as have dwelt in the land of our fathers, but have been driven out for a *season*, because of their sins; but, for the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Jehovah will gather them again and bring them into their land, and they are to possess it *for ever*. This character, therefore, is not applicable to every sinner.

Farewell.

Letter IV.

CONTINUATION OF THE SUBJECT.

Dear Benjamin,

I will again invite your attention to a few more predictions which foretell the restoration of our beloved people to their own land, and their conversion unto God, and the happy re-union of Judah and Ephraim. I begin with,

§ 1. Ezekiel, chap. 37, in which you will observe that

The prophet sees in a vision a valley of dry bones; he is interrogated with respect to the possibility of their living; he is commanded to bid them live in the name of the Lord. On issuing the proclamation, he perceived a noise among the bones; the bones shook, and came, each to its kindred bone; the sinews, flesh and skin then came upon them, and in answer to his prayer, life was communicated to them.

This allegory may be considered as a partial description of the state of our people in Babylon, and their unexpected deliverance from it: it may also, in some sense, be applied to the conversion of every sinner; but God himself interprets it of the future restoration, conversion, and reunion of the ten tribes with the house of Judah. It is evident that neither this vision, nor the remainder of the chapter, can be said to have received its full accomplishment in the return of our people from Babylon, or in the conversion of any sinner. It is not applicable to the return from the Babylonish captivity, for the following reasons:

The number of the ten tribes that might have returned with Judah was too small to contain a full accomplishment of this prophecy, which is expressly applied to the *whole*

house of Israel. Those who were to return, are described as an "exceeding great army;" but those of Judah and of the other ten tribes which returned from Babylon, were very far from answering this description. The people, to whom the promises in this chapter belong, have been scattered far and wide; they are said to be gathered "from all the heathen," to be gathered on *every side;* but during the Babylonish captivity our people were not far from each other. Again, they are to return to the land which had been *always desolate*, which is peculiarly applicable to the land of our fathers since their dispersion by the Romans. The pious character of the people that were to return, and the delight and pleasure God would have in the midst of them, is not applicable to the character of our people after their return from Babylon. Though the company which returned with Zerubbabel were many of them godly people, yet the whole history of our nation, from thence to the coming of Christ, is far from answering to what is said of them in this prophecy, "that they should walk in God's judgments, to observe his statutes, and do them; such promises also of "his tabernacle being with them, and his sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore," seem to be much too strong for the above period. Further, Ephraim, and the tribes that joined with him, and Judah, together with his associates, are to return and become one nation upon the mountains of Israel, which certainly has never been fulfilled, but will surely be accomplished. Again, it is promised, that, after this union shall have been effected, David, God's servant, shall be king over them, and he shall be their prince *for ever;* now it is evident that our people, after their return from Babylon, had no temporal prince of David's line to reign over them, nor have they had one since; but, after their return from their present lost condition, Christ Jesus, the Messiah, the true David, shall reign over them for ever and ever, as will also

appear from Hosea, 3d chap. to be considered next. Observe also, my dear Benjamin, that it is declared in the strongest terms, that God would never again cast them off, or disinherit them; which is surely not applicable to their first return; for in a very few centuries they were again cast off and more miserably *wasted* than before. The time when this prediction is to be fulfilled is called "the latter days," an expression which always refers to the time after the coming of the Messiah, which shows it was a long time after the prophet had spoken, see chap. 38 : 8, 16, 17. Lastly, you will please to notice that, in connection with this prophecy, mention is made in the next three chapters of a war made against the inhabitants of Judea, who had *just* returned to their land, and therefore had not had time to fortify their cities; the enemy is represented as such a numerous army as have never met before Jerusalem; and their destruction, and the deliverance of our people thereby, is ascribed to the immediate hand and power of God, or to a miracle, and that too of the most extraordinary kind. But it is evident, that, since the days of Ezekiel to the present time, no such event has happened, either to our people or to their enemies.

§ 2. From a consideration of all these things together, we may certainly conclude that this prophecy has never had its accomplishment, but refers to an event that is still future, and is not to happen till after our dear people are again settled in their own land of Canaan, and Judah and Ephraim united in one nation, under the happy reign of David their Lord and King, for ever and ever.

Neither can this famous prophecy be spiritualized, or applied with any propriety to the general conversion of sinners from amongst the Gentiles. For the people are declared by Jehovah himself, to be Ephraim and the house of Israel his companions, and Judah and his companions; and they shall be gathered out of *all their dwelling-places*,

where they have sinned, "and they shall dwell *in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt*, and they shall dwell therein, even they and their children, and their children's children for ever."

A very sensible writer in the Jewish Expositor (vol. 7, p. 13) has the following observation: "That this chapter is not to be applied in an allegorical sense, or applied to the Gentile churches, is evident from ver. 21 and 22: for how can the churches of the Gentiles, or the Christians in general, become one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel? Does not the stick of Judah and the stick of Joseph, &c. which are to become one, evidently mean the two kingdoms of Judah and Israel which had been divided? These are the true and literal children of Israel which are to be taken from among the heathen, and not any allegorical offspring, as some commentators suppose, in order to obscure some of the most clear and plain passages of the Scripture prophecies. If, then, a literal restoration of Israel is here intended, it is plain that the prophecy is not yet fulfilled, from ver. 25th, where it is said, that after the restoration here spoken of, "they shall dwell in the land of their forefathers, they and their children, and their children's children for ever." But this we cannot suppose to have been verified by any former return, as they have since been dispersed among all nations.

"This prophecy, therefore, is yet to be fulfilled, though not without some powerful opposition, which shall be unsuccessfully made against it by some great and populous nations in the latter days; which is the subject of the two following chapters."

§ 3. M. Henry, in his introduction to this chapter, says, "God has assured them in the foregoing chapter, that he would gather the house of Israel, even all of it, and would bring them to their own land; but there were two things that rendered this very unlikely:

"1st. That they were so dispersed amongst their enemies, so destitute of all helps and advantages which might favor or follow them on their return, and so dispirited likewise in their own minds upon all these accounts. They are here, in vision, compared to a valley full of dry bones of dead men, which should be brought together and raised to life. Ver. 1–14.

"2d. They were so much divided among themselves, too much of the old core remaining even in their captivity. But as to this, by a sign of two sticks made one in the hand of the prophet, is foreshown the happy coalition that should be, at their return, between the two nations of Israel and Judah." Ver. 15–22.

"The vision was evidently intended," says Dr. Scott, "in its primary meaning, to encourage the desponding Jews; to predict both their restoration after the captivity, and also their recovery from their present long continued dispersion."

Speaking of the union of the two sticks in the hand of the prophet, he says, "This was partially accomplished after the Babylonish captivity, when all the Israelites that returned with the Jews from Babylon settled under the same government, and formed with them one nation. But it is probable that there will hereafter be a more remarkable accomplishment of it."

On ver. 25 he says, "This cannot possibly be interpreted of any events that took place before the coming of Christ; and after his coming, the Jews were soon driven from their own land, and have never regained possession of it: yet the language is so expressive, that it seems plainly to mean that the Jews should dwell in Canaan, under the rule of Christ, from the time intended, through all generations to the end of the whole."

§ 4. Mr. Faber having proved the future restoration and conversion of Judah, he goes on to say,

"But the lost ten tribes of Israel are still dispersed through the extensive regions of the north and of the east. These, according to the sure word of prophecy, however they may be now concealed from mortal knowledge, will be found again, and will be brought back into the countries of their fathers. All nations and all tongues shall come and see the glory of the Lord; for he will set among them a sign, even the sign of the Son of man, the sign of the illuminated *Shechinah;* and will send unto them those that have escaped from the slaughter of the antichristian confederacy, that they may declare his glory among the nations. Convinced, by ocular demonstration, that God doth indeed reign in Zion, and at once divinely impelled and enabled both to seek out from among them, and to find the long lost sheep of the house of Israel, they will bring by land, in vast caravans, all the brethren of Judah for an offering unto the Lord, as the great maritime power had already brought the converted Jews for a present unto the Lord to his holy mountain. Then shall the stick of Joseph be united for ever with the stick of Judah: Ephraim shall be no more a separate people, but the whole house of Jacob shall become one nation under one king, even the mystic David, Jesus the Messiah.

"The various prophecies, which speak of the restoration of the ten tribes, certainly cannot relate to the restoration of those detached individuals out of them, who returned with Judah from the Babylonian captivity. This is manifest, both because their restoration is represented as perfectly distinct from the restoration of Judah, and because it is placed at once subsequent to that event, and to the overthrow of Antichrist. In fact, the converted fugitives from the armies of Antichrist are described as being greatly instrumental in bringing about the restoration of the ten tribes. Hence their restoration is plainly future; and hence we cannot with any degree of consistency apply

the predictions which foretell it, to the return of a few individuals from Babylon with Judah. Of the Jews who were carried away captive to Babylon, only a very small part, according to Houliegan, not more than a hundredth part, returned to their own country. Those who were left behind will doubtless, at the time of the second advent, be brought back along with their brethren of the ten tribes; just as those individuals of the ten tribes, who returned with Judah from Babylon, and (adhering to him notwithstanding the Samaritan schism) were afterwards scattered with him by the Romans, will be brought back with their brethren the Jews. So far, but no farther, the otherwise distinct restoration of Judah and of Joseph will in some measure be mingled together. This circumstance is very accurately noted by Ezekiel, even when predicting the twofold restoration of Judah and Joseph, and their subsequent union under one king. He speaks neither of Judah nor Joseph simply; but styles the one division Judah, and the children of Israel his companions; and the other division Joseph, and all the house of Israel his companions; thus plainly intimating that some of the children of Israel shall return with Judah; but that numbers of all the tribes, not of the kingdom of ten tribes only, but of all the tribes, shall return with Joseph."

A similar prophecy of the return and conversion of the ten tribes together with Judah we have in,

§ 5. Hosea, 3: 4, 5. "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: afterward shall the children of Israel return and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days."

Known unto God are all his works, from the beginning of the world; and whatever he has predetermined in his

eternal counsels, shall surely be fulfilled. Often, indeed, is the execution of his purposes delayed, till unbelievers begin to think that his word has failed of its accomplishment; but "in the evening time it shall be light;" and when the obstacles to his will seem almost insurmountable, he will glorify himself in fulfilling it beyond all human expectation. Thus he acted, when, according to his promise, he brought our fathers out of Egypt. He suffered them to be detained till the very last day that they could be consistently with the truth of his promise; and then, when our people themselves were almost reduced to despair, he brought them out with a mighty hand and stretched out arm. Thus, also, will he act yet once more toward the children of Israel, his chosen people. They have been for ages "cast out," almost beyond hope of recovery; but there is a period when they shall return, and commit themselves to the government of Christ, as ever they did to the direction of Moses. Of this glorious event the prophecy under consideration assures us. It consists of two parts. It announces the calamities which should befall the children of Israel, and foretells their happy deliverance. And as their calamities had respect both to their civil and religious state, so in like manner, their deliverance.

That this precious prophecy of their restoration to the knowledge, service and enjoyment of God, and the happy government of the Messiah over them, was not fulfilled at the return of our people from the Babylonish captivity, but is yet to be accomplished, is evident from the following consideration:

§ 6. That by "David their king," is meant the promised Messiah, is acknowledged by almost all our Rabbins, (as will be shown hereafter,) and by almost all Christian divines.

This is a title ascribed to him in several other passages, Jer. 30 : 9. Ezek. 34 : 23, 24. 37 : 21, 22, 24. The context

and the manifest scope of them determine them to belong to him.

He is called David, not only because he was the Son and Lord of David, but because David was an eminent type of him, in the meanness of his descent, the comeliness of his person, his wisdom and prudence, his courage and valor; in his holiness and the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit with which he was endowed, as also in his kingly office, and in the battles which he fought, as well as in the conquests which he obtained.

Now, it is a fact too well known to need proof, that our people, after their return from Babylon, were so far from "seeking the Lord their God, and David their king, and fearing the Lord and his goodness, that they grew worse and worse, till they had filled up the measure of their iniquity in crucifying the Lord of glory, and rejecting the offers of mercy through that very precious blood which they had imprecated upon themselves and their children, and for which the wrath of God has come upon our people and continued to the present day.

§ 7. Hence, I observe further, that the prediction of their return cannot yet have been accomplished, because their calamities have not yet ended. How remarkably striking has been the fulfillment of the former part of this prediction! For many centuries past, our dear people have not been a body politic, having no rule and dominion among themselves; they have no *king* nor *prince* of their own; the *sceptre* is departed from them; neither is any *sacrifice* offered by them, for their daily sacrifice has ceased; and what is very remarkable, although our people were once very prone to idolatrous worship, as their history shows, yet you well know, my dear Benjamin, that there is not now an image among them. And for this reason, many of our brethren, who, at their conversion, joined the Roman Catholics, as soon as they became acquainted with their

image worship, left them and joined the Protestants. Witness *Joseph Wolff*. And for this reason also, when the great council of our Rabbins in the valley of Hungaria, after many days' controversy with Romish priests, had resolved to embrace the Christian religion, but were told by the priests that they worshiped saints and their images, our people were so disgusted that they exclaimed, "No idols!" and the council broke up without further discussion.

Now, since it must be acknowledged, and actually is by most divines, that the former part of this prophecy has been fulfilled and is still fulfilling, both with respect to Judah and Ephraim, it follows that the second part is also to be fulfilled, after they *return* to seek the Lord. Besides, it is expressly said that the children of Israel should be, for *many days*, deprived of their privileges, and that they shall seek the Lord in the *latter days*. Both Jewish and Christian commentators agree that the latter days refer to the coming of the Messiah, and therefore this could not have been fulfilled before the coming of Jesus; and I have already shown that our people did not receive him as "David their king." Permit me now, my dear Benjamin, to add the testimony of our Rabbins, of blessed memory, and of a few Christian writers.

§ 8. *Kimchi* says, "These are the days of the captivity in which we now are; at this day we have no king, nor prince out of Israel, and we are under the power of the nations, and of their kings and princes; and have no sacrifice for God, nor image for idols; nor ephod for God, that declares future things; and teraphim for idolatry, which show things to come, according to the mind of those that believe in them."

Yarchi speaks much to the same effect: "Without sacrifice in the sanctuary of Judah, without an image of Baal in Samaria for the kings of Israel, without an ephod of Urim and Thummim, that declare hidden things, and

teraphim made for a time to speak of, and show things that are secret." With this agree the words of Aben Ezra and Abarbanel; and the Targum paraphrases it thus: without a king of the house of David, and without a ruler over Israel, without sacrifice for acceptance at Jerusalem, and without a high place in Samaria, and without an ephod in him that shows, i. e. what shall come to pass.

That the Messiah is meant by David, is acknowledged by all our Rabbins. Zohar, Exod. p. 93, c. 3. Jerusalem, Talmud, Berachoth, 5: 1; Bab. Tal. Megilah, 18: 1; Abarbanel Mash. Yeshua, 55: 4. Ab. Ezra, in loco. Chizuk. Emuna, 44; Michlal Yophi, Psa. 144: 14; Abendana, Note in Mich. Yophi, 1 Kings, 11: 39; Hag. 2: 23. The Targum says, "Seek the worship of the Lord their God, and obey Messiah the son of David, their king."

Rabbi Judah Monis, one of our Jewish brethren, who made a public profession of faith at Cambridge, Ms. 1722, in one of his discourses he says, "The first part of this prophecy, we do see, hath been fulfilled to the very last tittle, they having been, for the space of above 1650 years. (since the destruction of their commonwealth,) deprived of all these things mentioned in the 4th verse; and reduced from that state they were formerly in, which was such as could make any nation happy, to such an one as they are now in, scattered all over the world, subject to all sorts of nations that are willing to let them live among them, ruled by their own enemies; paying tribute to all nations where they live; and finally enduring all the calamities and opprobrious treatment that can make them unhappy; and as we have seen the first part accomplished, so I hope the second part will be fulfilled also, i. e. they shall return and seek the Lord, and David their king, i. e. the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, and fear him and his goodness in the latter days, and look on him whom they have pierced." Zech. 12: 10.

§ 9. The learned Dr. Pocock says, "By the children of Israel are meant the ten tribes, for these does the prophet peculiarly now prophecy to, and the things more especially concern them. This prophecy is not applicable to the children of Israel before the destruction of the second temple."

Mr. Fuller, having proved, by the first and second chapters of Hosea, the future conversion of Judah and Israel, proceeds to say, "The third chapter contains another prophecy on the same subject. Like the former, it is introduced under the form of a parable. The case supposed is that of a man attached to a woman who is an adultress. Go, saith the Lord to the prophet, see if thou canst love such an one; yet such, if any thing, must be my love to this people. The prophet is further supposed to go and covenant with this adultress, engaging her to desist for many days from her lewd courses, living, as it were, as a widow, by herself, and afterward she should become his wife. Such was the love of the Lord to the children of Israel. He loved them notwithstanding their idolatry, and intended, at a future time, to take them to be his people. He would not receive them, however, in their idolatry, nor till a proper time had elapsed, in which they should live in a state of separation; but in due season he would take them to himself as his church and people, remembering their sin no more.

"The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice. Never surely has a prophecy corresponded more exactly with fact. Nor is this all: the whole of the Israelitish race, with whom we have any acquaintance, have also been without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim; that is, though mixed with the nations of the world, and in other respects wicked in the extreme, yet they have not been suffered to go into their former idolatrous prac-

tices; and have thus answered to the adultress ceasing from playing the harlot, and abiding for her husband, in a state of separation many days. Afterwards shall the children of Israel return and seek Jehovah their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days. On this no reflection need be made, save this, that the superabundant grace of God towards them, in their outcast and perishing condition, shall not only fill their hearts with gratitude, but inspire them with a holy fear of offending him any more."

§ 10. Dr. Scott says, "Some interpret this almost wholly of the kingdom of Israel: but the prophecy seems to require us to understand it of the whole people descended from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." Again, "The kingdom of Israel was, soon after this, entirely ruined, and the people were incorporated either with the Jews or the nations among whom they resided; and have had neither king, prince, priest, sacrifice, nor religious establishment, from that day to this. The Jews remained several years without these advantages, during the Babylonish captivity; yet their civil and religious constitution was again restored. But since the rejection of that nation at the introduction of Christianity, and the destruction of their city and temple by the Romans, they have continued to this time, for much above seventeen hundred years, without a king or prince of their own nation; and without priest and sacrifice, or any thing substituted in the place of the temple worship: and (what is still more remarkable) they have also remained without an image, ephod, or teraphim, without any of those idolatrous observances and apparatus to which they were so generally attached when this prophecy was uttered." "It was also predicted that afterwards they should return, (from their state of rejection and unbelief,) and seek the Lord their God, and David their King:" "This, even their own writers explain of the promised Messiah, and

doubtless it foretold their future conversion to Christ; for which they are evidently preserved a separate people, neither a part of the true church, nor yet given up to spiritual adultery; but put aside on a separate, scanty maintenance, in a debased condition, for a long time, (like Hosea's wife,) to be at length received to favor again."

Now, my dear Benjamin, there are many more predictions of a similar nature with those we have already considered, such as Isa. 2 : 1–5. 11 : 11–16. 49 : 14–26. Amos, 9 : 11–15. Zephaniah, 3 : 8–20. Zech. 8 : 18–23, &c. &c. But I shall solicit your attention only to two more, which we shall consider in my next.

Farewell.

Letter V.

THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

Beloved Brother Benjamin,

Permit me now to call your attention once more to two passages of Scripture which predict the future restoration and conversion of our dear people. I commence with,

§ 1. Jerem. 31 : 31–40. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; (which my covenant they broke, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord:) but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after

those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the Lord of hosts is his name: if those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the Lord, if the heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel, for all they have done, saith the Lord. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built to the Lord, from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner; and the measuring-line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goath; and the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse-gate towards the east, shall be holy unto the Lord; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever."

Although this prediction respecting a New Covenant is applied by the apostle (Heb. 8) to the commencement of the New Testament dispensation, and was actually made or established by the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus; and although the blessings of this covenant are the same as are enjoyed by every converted sinner, yet literally and more fully it respects our nation, with whom the other covenant had been made when God brought them out of Egypt. Nor was this prediction fulfilled in the conversion of our bre-

thren in the apostolic time, for, however many of them may have been converted, they have all been mixed with the converts of other nations; but the promise in this prophecy is the conversion, not of a few, or many, "but the whole house of Israel and the house of Judah," ver. 31, "the nation," ver. 36, just as the covenant of Sinai had been made with the nation. "They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them." ver. 34. Further, this promise was made to the ten tribes as well as to the house of Judah. Long before the giving of this promise, our people were divided into two parts. The one of them, in a way of distinction from the other, retained the name of *Israel*. These were the *ten tribes* which fell off from the house of David, under the conduct of *Ephraim*; whence they are often also in the prophets called by that name. The other, consisting of the tribe properly so called, with that of *Benjamin* and the greatest part of Levi, took the name of *Judah*, and afterwards was called the *Jews*, and with them the promise remained in a peculiar manner. But, whereas they all originally sprang from Abraham, who received the promise for them all, and because they were all equally, in their forefather, brought into the bond of the old covenant, they are here mentioned distinctly, that none of the seed of Abraham might be excluded from the tender of this covenant. Hence, unto the whole seed of Abraham according to the flesh, it was that this covenant was first to be offered. So Peter tells them in his first sermon, that the promise was unto them and their children who were there present, i. e. *the house of Judah*, and to them that are afar off, i. e. *the house of Israel*, or the *ten tribes*, in their dispersion. Acts, 2 : 39. It appears therefore plainly, that the promise is yet to be fulfilled in the conversion of the ten tribes as well as the house of Judah. Besides, at that time "the city shall be built, which shall not be plucked up or thrown down any more for ever." ver. 38, 40.

It is evident, therefore, that our people will first return to the literal Canaan, rebuild the city, and after that be converted as a nation; and the sure fulfillment of it is more certain than the stability of heaven and earth.

§ 2. "This new covenant," says the learned and judicious A. McLean, "was promised to be made with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. These, in the first place, signify the election among the natural posterity of Abraham, with whose fathers the old covenant was made. ver. 9. To them, in the first instance, belong 'the covenants and the promises,' Rom. 9 : 4; and among them they had their first accomplishment, Acts, 3 : 25, 26; and though the bulk of that nation was broken off, through their unbelief and rejection of the Messiah, Rom. 11 : 20; yet this covenant still wears a favorable aspect towards that people, when the fullness of the Gentiles shall be come in; for this is God's covenant unto them, when he shall take away their sins." ver. 25–27. "When Israel shall be again called into the church," says Dr. Scott, "it will not be according to the Sinai covenant; but by having the law written in their hearts, and the covenant thus inwardly ratified to them. As much as the heavenly bodies will continue their settled course to the end of time, so surely will Israel be continued a separate people, without being finally excluded from the church; nor will God ever cast them all off for all their sins, till it be possible for man to measure the height of the heavens, or to search out the foundations of the earth." The last prediction I shall name, is that by the Prophet,

§ 3. Zechariah, 12 : 10–14. "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-

born. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart."

1st. That this is a prophecy respecting the Messiah, is acknowledged by our Rabbins, Succah, fo. 52. 1; R. S. Ben. Melech in loco; Ber. Rab. fo. 905; Yarchi and Kimchi in loco; R. Haddarshan, Gen. 28. Some think that part of ver. 10 was spoken by the prophet, viz. "they shall mourn for him," because it is spoken in the third person, *for him;* but no converted sinner, whether Jew or Gentile, needs to mourn for *him*, i. e. Messiah or Christ, but they will mourn for the *act* of having pierced him; for the word *alav*, translated him, signifies also *it*, or on account of it, concerning it. To return.

2d. Two things are ascribed to the Messiah. He was to be pierced; and he was to pour upon the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications.

3d. The effect of the operations of the Holy Spirit was twofold. Faith in the Messiah, "they shall look unto him," by which faith is expressed; great mourning and true repentance for having pierced him. We have then a description of the nature and extent of the mourning. The former is compared to that of a tender mother, having lost "an only son, or a first-born," which mourning is sincere, deep and lasting; and the extent is compared to that mourning which was occasioned by the death of Josiah, who was slain at Hadadrimmon, in the valley of Megiddon; the greatest mourning our people were acquainted with, and

on that account it grew up into a proverb, and as that mourning was national, so would this be also.

Such, my dear Benjamin, is the outline of this precious promise. Now, that the person predicted is the Messiah Jesus, I have shown in a former letter, (p. 396;) and that although this prediction may have been partially fulfilled in the conversion of many of our Jewish brethren in the apostolic times, and however applicable it is to the conversion of every sinner; yet it must be allowed that its proper and complete fulfillment is yet to come. It is evident that no such repentance and faith, such general and particular mourning for piercing Christ, has ever taken place amongst our dear people; nor has the preceding part of the chapter, closely connected with the prediction under consideration, been fulfilled. Jerusalem must first be rebuilt, before it is besieged by the united power of many kings, who shall then be destroyed in a miraculous manner. I conclude, therefore, that this is a prophecy concerning the future restoration of our nation to the literal land of Canaan; that they will rebuild the city Jerusalem; that they will afterward be besieged by many nations, who shall be destroyed by God himself; and in that day Judah and Israel shall be converted unto God.

§ 4. "That we may perceive," says Dr. Fuller, "the connection of the prophecy, (Zech., chap. 12,) it will be proper to observe, that chapter 11 contains a prediction of the overthrow of the Jewish nation by the Romans; but chapter 12 contains a prophecy of their restoration; and this is, therefore, called 'the burden of the word of the Lord,' ver. 1.

"The events of this and the foregoing prophecy, though wide asunder as to time, yet very properly follow each other. Paul takes but little notice of the state of the Jews, during their long dispersion; but passing over that chasm, as included in their being *broken off*, proceeds to speak of their being grafted in again. Rom. 11.

"It were presumptuous to be very positive as to the meaning of a prophecy which is yet to be accomplished; but, comparing it with other prophecies of the same event, the following particulars appear to be conveyed by it:

"1st. That the Jews shall be restored to their own land prior to their conversion, ver. 6.

"2d. That a grand combination will be formed against them, with a view to dispossess them, ver. 2, 9.

"3d. That the nations engaged in this combination will be repulsed and sorely punished for their presumptuous attempt, ver. 2–6.

"4th. That the country and city shall be united against the enemy, ver. 5, 7.

"5th. That they shall be guarded by Providence, and strengthened to encounter the greatest difficulties, ver. 8.

"6th. That after these temporal interpositions, the Lord will pour upon them a spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall lament over their sins, and the sins of their fathers, particularly in having crucified the Lord of glory, ver. 10.

"Finally, The remedy to all this grief is mentioned, chap. 13: 1. 'In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.' By looking to Jesus, they were wounded; and by looking to Jesus, they are healed. The *first fruits* of this great work appeared on the day of Pentecost, when thousands were pricked to the heart, repented, and were baptized in that name which they had despised; but the *lump* is yet to appear. 'Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things: and blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and amen.'"

§ 5. Some expositors consider this as predicting the victories of the Maccabees over Antiochus; but that persecutor never besieged Jerusalem; "and the language," says Bp. Newcomb, "is much too strong to denote the success

of the Maccabees." Again he says, "God's signal interposition in behalf of Judah and Jerusalem, at their future restoration, having been foretold, the prophet proceeds to foretell their conversion to Christianity."

"The former part of this chapter relates to an invasion made upon the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem in the latter times of the world, probably after their restoration and settlement in their own land." Bp. Lowth.

"However it may be accommodated," says Dr. Scott, "some special events were doubtless intended by the Holy Spirit, and it is probable that the grand accomplishment of it is yet to be expected. The ancestors of the Jews caused Christ to be nailed to the cross, and pierced by the soldier's spear; for they employed the Romans to execute the sentence which they had denounced, exclaiming, 'His blood be upon us and on our children;' and their posterity have ever since been consenting to this deed by their obstinate unbelief. But at the predicted period they will know who this crucified Jesus was, and then they shall by faith look to him, and mourn over him, as pierced and slain by them. A partial fulfillment of this took place at and after the day of Pentecost, in the conversion of numbers of the Jews who had just before crucified Christ, and it is descriptive of the conversion of sinners in every age. Yet there can be no reasonable doubt but it is an intended prediction of the conversion of the Jewish nation, when they shall, as one body, embrace the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

Thus, my dear Benjamin, I hope I have, to your satisfaction, established, upon divine testimony, the proposition that our dear people, both Judah and Ephraim, will be brought back to their own land, and after that be brought to the belief in the Lord Jesus Christ; yet it may not be improper to remind you of a few facts, as collateral evidence.

§ 6. It is the opinion of many eminent writers, that our people have never yet possessed *all* the land which God

promised to our fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; but the time will surely come, when our faithful covenant God will fulfill his promises in the fullest extent. See this subject ably discussed in the Jewish Expositor, 1822, p. 271–276. See also the quotation from Joseph Mede, in the preceding 3d letter, § 3.

§ 7. The wonderful preservation of our people as a distinct nation, is another argument in favor of their return to their own land. It has been foretold by Moses and the prophets, that though they shall be dispersed amongst all nations, yet they should not be totally destroyed, but still subsist as a distinct people. Read carefully, my dear Benjamin, the following passages: Lev. 26: 44; Numb. 23: 9; Jer. 30: 11; Amos, 9: 8. Our beloved nation, like the bush of Moses, hath been always burning, but it is never consumed. And what a marvelous thing it is, that after so many wars, battles and sieges, after so many fires, famines and pestilences, after so many years of captivity, slavery and misery, they are not destroyed utterly, and though scattered among all people, yet subsist as a distinct people by themselves. Where is any thing comparable to this to be found in all the histories and in all the nations under the sun? How just and beautiful is the observation of Bp. Newton on this subject: "The preservation of the Jews through so many ages, and the total destruction of their enemies, are wonderful events; and are still more wonderful, by being signified beforehand by the spirit of prophecy, as we find particularly in the prophet Jeremiah, 46: 28. 'Fear not thou, O Jacob my servant, saith the Lord; for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee, but I will not make a full end of thee.' The preservation of the Jews is really one of the most signal and illustrious acts of Divine Providence. They are dispersed among all nations, yet they are not confounded with any. The drops of rain which fall, nay, the great

rivers which flow into the ocean, are soon mingled and lost in the immense body of waters: and the same, in all human probability, would have been the fate of the Jews; they would have been mingled and lost in the common mass of mankind; but, on the contrary, they flow into all parts of the world, mix with all nations, and yet keep separate from all. They still live as a distinct people, and yet they no where live according to their own laws, no where elect their own magistrates, no where enjoy the full exercise of their religion. Their solemn feasts and sacrifices are limited to one certain place, and that hath been now for many ages in the hands of strangers and aliens, who will not suffer them to come thither. No people have continued unmixed so long as they have done, not only of those who have sent forth colonies into foreign countries, but even of those who have abodes in their own country. The northern nations have come in swarms unto the most southern parts of Europe, but where are they now to be discerned and distinguished? The Gauls went forth in great bodies, to seek their fortune in foreign parts; but what traces or footsteps of them are now remaining any where? In France, who can separate the race of the ancient Gauls from the various other people who from time to time have settled there? In Spain, who can distinguish exactly between the first possessors, the Spaniards and Goths, and the Moors, who conquered and kept possession of the country for some ages? In England, who can pretend to say with certainty which families are derived from the ancient Britons, and which from the Romans, or Saxons, or Danes, or Normans? The most ancient and honorable pedigrees can be traced up only to a certain period, and beyond that, there is nothing but conjecture and uncertainty, obscurity and ignorance: but the Jews can go up higher than any nation, they can even date their pedigree from the beginning of the world. They

may not know from what particular tribe or family they are descended, but they know certainly that they all spring from the stock of Abraham. And yet, the contempt with which they have been treated, and the hardships which they have undergone in almost all countries, should, one would think, have made them desirous to forget or renounce their original; but they possess it, they glory in it: and after so many wars, massacres and persecutions, they still subsist, they still are very numerous: and what but a supernatural power could have preserved them in such a manner as none other nation upon earth hath been preserved?"

§ 8. As another argument, I would simply remind you, my dear Benjamin, of the general expectation of our people to return to the land of our fathers. You know that this desire is interwoven in all their prayers from day to day, and more particularly so in the prayers for the festivals, especially on the feast of the passover, when it is said repeatedly, "This year we are here, at the next year we shall be in the land of Israel." Now, my dear Benjamin, I cannot but hope that these prayers are "the prayers of faith," i. e. believing the many promises of God on this subject, just as *Joseph*, my namesake, who, just before his death, said to his brethren, "I die, and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land, into the land of which he sware unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." Gen. 50 : 24. It was this promise that supported our fathers in the house of the Egyptian bondage, and encouraged them, even when every appearance of hope was gone, to groan, and sigh, and pray unto the Lord for deliverance: "And Jehovah said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows, and am come down to deliver them out of the land of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and

a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites. Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me; and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt." Exod. 3: 7–10. In like manner our dear people, under their present long and unparalleled afflictions, have been supported solely by the "full assurance of faith and hope" in God's many and precious promises, that he will surely gather them again out of every nation, and bring them into the land which he gave to our fathers; and they will not be disappointed in their expectation.

§ 9. Let it also be considered, my dear Benjamin, as a most remarkable circumstance and strong argument in favor of our people's returning again to the land of our fathers, that they are so situated that at the shortest notice they are ready and able to depart as easily as when they came out of Egypt. They have no country they call their own besides the land of Canaan; they are strangers and sojourners as our fathers were; they have no landed property to dispose of; they do not intermarry with other nations, so as to be detained by attachments to relations, friends or possessions. Thus God makes "the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder thereof he will restrain." Nay, their former enemies will become their friends, and help them in their way to their original possession. "That in all the countries where they are," says the Rev. J. Lunn, "they should, generally speaking, have no property, either in houses or lands, no heritable possession or share in the government, or any thing to detain them from returning to their native country, in case an opportunity should happen, looks as if Providence intended one day to turn back their

captivity, and to put them into possession of their ancient inheritance. The many disappointments which that people have met with, in attempting to obtain a settlement, or the privileges of citizens, in different countries, may indeed be looked upon as a punishment, and part of the curse that lies upon them for their sin in crucifying the Savior and continuing so long to reject his Gospel; and no doubt so it is: but when we consider the kindness of Providence to them in other respects, his preserving, supporting, and even multiplying them, notwithstanding the numberless massacres and persecutions they have sustained, I say, when we consider these things, we cannot help thinking that Providence, in disappointing them of a settlement, has some other end in view besides punishing them for their infidelity. If we deny the restoration of the Jews, we will find it hard to account for their prosperity. But if we admit of their future restoration, then the reason not only of their worldly prosperity, but of all the other dispensations of Providence towards them, is most apparent. He denies them a settlement in the countries where they are, to prevent their having any attachment to them, and that they may be under no temptation to stay still, or look back, whensoever they are called in the course of Providence to remove; and for this reason, also, he suffers them to be hated and persecuted, namely, that they may be the more willing to quit the places where they are so used; and lastly, he endows them with riches, that they may have wherewith to support themselves on their journey to their native country, and to establish themselves therein: for as many of them live at a great distance from Palestine, to travel so far, and to erect a settlement for themselves in a country almost desolate, is a thing not to be done without considerable wealth; and their being endowed with such wealth, as it renders their return possible, so it adds to the probability of it. Thus both the kindness and the severity

of Providence towards this people serve to confirm the doctrine I have been endeavoring to prove, viz. their future conversion and restoration."

§ 10. Permit me, my dear Benjamin, to mention one more argument in favor of the *speedy* return of our dear people to the land which, though it once flowed with milk and honey, has for many ages been desolate, but will soon become like "the garden of Eden," viz. the removal of the obstacles out of their way. Not only are *they* prepared by the remarkable hand of Providence to return at a moment's warning, but the way is also preparing for them. The great river Euphrates is drying up; the once terrible Turkish empire is crumbling into pieces; and the determined time "for the land to be trodden under foot by the Gentiles" is near its close, and kings talk of becoming their nursing fathers, and queens their nursing mothers. On each of these particulars, my dear Benjamin, I should gladly expatiate at considerable length, had not I detained you already too long, and greatly exceeded my prescribed limits.

Before I proceed to answer the objections generally brought against the preceding proposition, I will endeavor to answer a question very frequently proposed, viz.

§ 11. If the Jews return to their own land, will they rebuild the city of Jerusalem? Will they have a temple, altar, sacrifice, and priest?

First, as it respects Jerusalem, there can be no reasonable doubt in the mind of those who will be guided by the plain word of God. Almost in every passage, where the restoration of our people to their own land is mentioned, the building of the city of Jerusalem, in its own place, is also mentioned. Read only the following predictions: Jer. 30 : 8–11, 18. 31 : 38–40. Zech. 12 : 1–8. Nor ought we to lose sight of the prediction of the blessed Jesus himself, who said, "And Jerusalem shall be trodden down

of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled," Luke, 21 : 24; which evidently implies that when the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, Jerusalem shall no longer be trodden down, but be rebuilt and inhabited again by her own people. Dr. Guise, on this passage, says, "Jerusalem itself shall be sacked and trampled upon with indignation and contempt; and shall be kept under the jurisdiction of the *Gentiles*, and never be rebuilt again, with any grandeur, suitable to its present state, till the glorious days shall come, which are appointed for the general conversion of the *Jews*, and bringing in of the fullness of the Gentiles. Our Lord hereby seems to intimate, that then Jerusalem should be rebuilt, and the *Jews* gathered to their own country and city again; and that the Gentiles shall then no longer lord it over them, but all nations shall flow in unto them, and shall walk in their light, rejoicing in God's mercy to them, and sharing in all spiritual blessings with them." Dr. Doddridge says, "It seems reasonable to suppose that here, as in most other places, the Gentiles are opposed to the Jews; and consequently all the period between the destruction of Jerusalem and the *restoration of the Jews to their own land*, so expressly foretold in *Scripture*, is here intended." (See Isaiah, 27 : 12, 13. Ezek. 11 : 17. 20 : 40, 42. 34 : 13. 36 : 24, 28. 37 : 21–28. 39 : 28, 29. Hosea, 3 : 5. Amos, 9 : 14, 15. and Zech. 14 : 10, 11.)

Dr. Gill says, "Then the Jews will be converted, and return to their own land, and rebuild and inhabit Jerusalem: but till that time it will be, as it has been, and still is, possessed by the Gentiles." My dear Benjamin, I might greatly multiply quotations of this nature, but these may suffice.

§ 12. And as it respects the other part of the question, about building a temple, and having an altar and sacrifice, &c. &c. my answer to the whole is in the affirmative. For,

how could I doubt it for a moment, even if the word of God were perfectly silent on the subject? Suppose a company of five thousand pious and conscientious Christians had gone to Africa to colonize, and had drawn up various articles how to proceed when arrived there; viz. to build a city of such and such dimensions, to erect so many houses, to plant vineyards, to establish certain factories, &c. &c.; but not a word is said in this compact about keeping the Sabbath and building a place of worship, forming a church and administering the ordinances; and suppose also that intelligence has been received, giving an account of their safe arrival and establishment according to the original agreement, but again not a word is mentioned about their religious deportment; would any one who had known these five thousand pious Christians suppose for a moment that they kept no Sabbath, that they had no place of worship, that they had constituted no church, and consequently administered no ordinances, merely because they had not expressly covenanted to do so, and because the intelligence that has reached us of their perfect establishment made no mention of these things? Would such a supposition not be a stigma on their character? Would it not loudly proclaim their former religious professions to have been a hypocrisy of the most heinous kind? Or, must it not rather be taken for granted, by all who believe them to be sincere Christians, that after their arrival, in imitation of the pious patriarchs, who, wherever they pitched their tents, erected immediately an altar unto the Lord, the very first thing they attended to after their safe arrival, was to build a house of worship, and to walk in all God's appointed ways? And now, my dear Benjamin, why should it be thought strange to believe that our dear people, who have, for nearly eighteen hundred years, most conscientiously observed all the religious rites which God gave to our fathers, in all countries, amongst all people, and under

all circumstances, as far as the law of God allows them to observe them in a strange land, although these observances exposed them to reproach, hatred, persecution, and death itself, would, when they are brought back by the wonderful goodness of God, to the land which God gave to our fathers, build again a temple for the worship of God, erect an altar unto the Lord, and offer up their sacrifices, and observe all other ceremonies which they observed before their dispersion by the Romans? Did they not do so after their return from the Babylonish captivity? How strange and unaccountable would it appear if our people, who, whilst the chastening hand of God was upon them for ages, were, notwithstanding, steadfast and immovable in worshiping that God, should cast off all their religious profession, love and attachment to him, when he has performed his promises in delivering them out of their captivity, and brought them back to the goodly land? Would not such a supposition charge them with "having denied the faith, and become worse than infidels?" God forbid that they should ever act so basely.

§ 13. I am aware, my dear Benjamin, that this sentiment is not only open to an objection which I hope to meet by and by; but some will even charge me with heresy. For a learned and pious author has already thus expressed himself: "It will not be denied that the possession of the land of Canaan by the natural posterity of Abraham formed an integral part of that covenant. Accordingly as long as that covenant remained in force, Israel retained possession of the land; but when Paul wrote his epistle to the Hebrews, that economy had waxed old, and was ready to vanish away. Now, to me," he says, "it appears, that to contend for the return of the Jews, *as a nation*, to their own land, is in effect to 'build again the things that are destroyed;'—it is virtually denying that the Sinai covenant has *vanished away*—it is pleading for its restoration—it is,

in a word, denying that Christ is come, or, if come, it is denying that his kingdom is *not* of this world."

These are hard sayings, my dear Benjamin. Here is *multum in parvo*. A bad spirit, bad theology, and bad reasoning. This is condemning in a lump a host of the most eminently learned and pious Christians in every age, who have believed that the Jews will return again to their own country. Here is a sad confounding of the covenant which God made with Abraham, which had the land of Canaan for its object, the natural posterity of Abraham for its subjects, and circumcision for its seal; and that covenant which the Lord made with our fathers when he brought them out of Egypt, which had the promised Messiah, and salvation by him, for its antitype. The former is called the Abrahamic, the second the Sinaic covenant. Hence the latter *vanished away* when Christ came, as the shadow gives way to the substance; but when and where did God say that the Abrahamic covenant should be *disannulled, or vanish away?* On the contrary, "heaven and earth may sooner cease than this covenant." Jer. 31 : 35–38. These two covenants are as distinct in their nature and duration, as the covenant made with Noah and that made at the foot of Mount Sinai. And although the Abrahamic was included in the Sinaic, yet as the former existed before the latter was made, so likewise it continued in force after the other waxed old and vanished away. Besides, what has the mere restoration of the Jews to their own land to do with the coming of Christ? What difference does it make where the Jews reside, whether in Judea or Europe? You know, my dear Benjamin, that I have proved that the Messiah has come, not from the location of the Jews, but from his having fulfilled all that was written of him in the Law, in the Prophets, and in the book of Psalms; and you will doubtless remember that I have also proved, in a variety of particulars, that Christ's kingdom is *not* of this

world; yet I believe that he will reign on the earth for a thousand years, but not in a worldly spirit, after the manner and customs of this world.

Having, I trust, my dear Benjamin, established the point, that our beloved people, both Judah and Ephraim, are to return to the literal Canaan *before* their conversion; that they will rebuild Jerusalem, and establish Judaism for a *season*, and *afterwards* be converted, "and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days;" I will now endeavor to answer the principal objections brought against this sentiment.

§ 14. A writer in the Christian Spectator of 1826, over the signature of *Aleph*, proposes the following question: "Will the Jews, after their conversion to Christianity, be restored to any of their former peculiar distinctions?" He then goes on to state his *imaginary* difficulties in a literal fulfillment of the prophecies. Now you will easily perceive, my dear Benjamin, that this writer, by putting "the cart before the horse," has run into a slough of despond, from which he thought he could extricate himself only by making a desperate leap—of *spiritualizing* all that the prophets have said concerning the future condition of our people and nation. Had he put the question thus, "Will the Jews be restored to any of their former peculiar distinctions, and afterwards be converted to Christianity?" all would have been plain and easy. This has been the fatal mistake of almost all the writers in opposition to the literal restoration of our people that I have seen, viz. putting the conversion of Israel before their restoration instead of after it.

Aleph objects that the New Testament speaks only of their spiritual conversion, but is silent respecting the return to Canaan, &c. Answer, The reason is plain: the Jews were, at that time, still in their own land; the only question agitated was, whether all Israel was cut off, or only a part. Nor

was the literal restoration denied till ages after their dispersion by the Romans.

Next he says, "that at the time of the conversion of the Jews, there will be but one fold, under one shepherd." True, this is my belief, but that does not prevent their literal return *before their conversion*, and their re-establishing Judaism, and remaining, probably for *forty* years, till the Lord shall pour out the spirit of grace and supplication, agreeably to Zechariah, 12 : 10–14.

Again he objects, that "the end for which God kept them distinct is answered." How does Aleph know that God had but one end to answer, in keeping our people distinct from all other nations of the earth?

If the end has been obtained, why has God kept them distinct in so wonderful a manner hitherto? Does God act without design? May not the Lord have some wise design in bringing them back to their own land, and permitting them to re-establish Judaism in all its former splendor, and afterwards opening their eyes to see infinitely more glory in Jesus and his cross than in these things, and thus laying aside Judaism, for the establishment of which they had waited so long, and trusting only in Jesus Christ, as their Savior and their God? Would not such a mode be a much greater display of the power of the Gospel, than if the Jews were converted gradually in their dispersed state? But I must forbear.

He further objects, that because Christ did not comply with the repeated wishes of the Jews to restore to them the kingdom, therefore he will never restore it. Answer. That Christ did not comply with their carnal wishes, was because that was not his errand at his first coming; but when did he say that he would never restore them after their dispersion, or that he would *never reign personally* on the earth?

§ 15. Others have objected, "that their return is pro-

mised upon their repentance, and therefore their conversion must precede." True, God expects their repentance; but repentance and conversion do not always go together. There never will be conversion without repentance, but there may be repentance without conversion. Surely their repentance cannot mean that of a converted soul—such godly sorrow, such repentance as flows from a renewed heart; for this condition is to be performed before they return to their own land, but the change of heart is promised as succeeding their restoration. Deut. 30: 1–6; Ezek. ch. 36, &c. "It is, however," says a son of Abraham in the Jewish Expositor, "by no means true, that the patriarchal promises were conditional. The terms in which they were given are as absolute as can possibly be conceived; the blessings are most evidently made to depend, not on the conduct of men, but on the sovereign will and power, the eternal foreknowledge, and the unchangeable faithfulness of Jehovah: he does not say, *if thou*, or *thy seed;* but, *I have given—by myself have I sworn*, I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of. It is true that the covenant of Sinai was conditional; but this was only of temporal duration: even while it was in full force, the prophets foretold that the days were coming when the Lord would make a new and an unconditional covenant 'with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah;' (Jer. 36, &c.) and with this, as contradistinguished from the other, the Holy Spirit has explicitly identified the patriarchal covenant, for he has taught us by a prophet of the New Testament, that 'the covenant which was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred years after, could not disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect; for if the inheritance were of the law, it would be no more of promise, but God gave it to Abraham by promise.'" (Gal. 3.)

There is but one objection more that I shall notice, viz.

"that if the Jews are to return to Canaan before their conversion, then it is needless to make exertions to promote their conversion." Does it follow, my dear Benjamin, that because we do not expect the national conversion of our people till after their restoration to Canaan, that therefore no individuals may be converted before that time? The Apostle Paul said and believed that our dear people would continue under the influence of spiritual darkness until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, yet that did not prevent him from going into the synagogue every Sabbath day, and reasoning with them from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. "Who hath despised the day of small things?"

But I have already mentioned that a considerable number of our brethren will be converted before the nation returns, and that these will not return with them, but be carried thither afterwards, agreeably to Isa. 18th. On this, as well as on all the other parts mentioned in the first section of the third letter in this part, I intended to have greatly enlarged; but I am compelled to close, at least for the present,* the subject of the second advent of Christ, to leave some room for the last part proposed, viz. The coming of the Messiah to judge the world. Farewell.

* The restoration of the Jews, and other subjects connected with the millennium, will necessarily be considered in the future numbers of the Jewish Intelligencer.

PART VI.

MESSIAH THE JUDGE OF THE WORLD.

Letter I.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

My Dear Benjamin,

Having in the preceding part given you a *brief statement* of the second advent of the Messiah, I will now invite your attention to his coming to judge the world, which solemn transaction will be preceded by the general resurrection of the dead, and which is proposed as the subject of the present letter.

§ 1. By the resurrection, is meant the restoration, by the power of God, of the same identical body which died, in all the essential and integral parts of it, rendering it, in a reunion of, or with the soul, immortal, or of an eternal duration in blessedness or misery.

This doctrine is a fundamental article of faith with our people, as well as Christians. You will recollect the 13th article, which reads thus: "I believe with a perfect faith, that the dead will be restored to life, when it shall be so ordained by the decree of the Creator; blessed be his name, and exalted be his remembrance for ever and ever." And the apostle placed it among "the principles of the doctrine of Christ." Heb. 6 : 2. And we are not so sure to rise out of our beds, as we are to rise out of our graves. But as there are still some *Sadducees* amongst our people, and too many

infidels amongst Christians, who do not believe this doctrine, I will endeavor to prove it.

§ 2. There are probably but few who will deny the *possibility* of a resurrection. Surely all things are possible with God. His knowledge is infinite.

It is easy for God to give to every one his own body.

If it be possible for a gardener that has 30 several seeds in his hand, to be able to distinguish between seed and seed; and for a chemist to extract the elements out of an herb and separate them one from the other; and for a watchmaker to take a watch in pieces, and unite the pieces together again as before; much more is it possible for the omniscient God to distinguish one particle of dust from the other, as well as one man from another, and one stone from another.

§ 3. God is also almighty in power. He can more easily raise the body out of the grave, that we can raise a man out of sleep.

He that believeth the first article of the creed, that God is almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, will believe this article also, viz. that God can raise the dead. For if he can make a body, being nothing, out of the dust of the earth, he certainly can repair it out of the dust when it is something. It is as easy for God to restore a body to a soul at the resurrection, as to breathe a soul into the body at the creation. God has an unlimited power, and raises the dead, not according to natural laws and measures, but according to the efficacy of his own will, which does not stand in need of any to accomplish what he pleases.

Nor is there any thing connected with this subject that is absurd or contradictory. Farther, my dear Benjamin, consider that a resurrection is not only possible, but highly probable. This may be argued,

§ 4. From analogy of both inanimate and animate objects. The constant vicissitudes that are in the world preach

to us a resurrection; such as the revolution of seasons, the dying and reviving corn, and the various changes in creatures that have life. Both philosophers and divines write of the phoenix, that first she is consumed to ashes by the heat of the sun, that afterwards of her ashes arises a young one, which is the same phoenix risen from the dead. The apostle tells us, that the corn must first be cast into the ground, and then die and rot, before it will spring up; which showeth that a resurrection from the dead is possible even in nature. Add to this, that swallows, flies and worms, which lie dead in the winter season, revive again in the spring by virtue of the sun's heat. What is every night but the grave (as it were) of the daylight, and the morning but the resurrection of the day? What is the winter but the death of the fruits of the earth, and the spring but the resurrection of them? What is death but the pulling down of the house of the body? And what is the resurrection, but the rebuilding of the same house? And why then should any one think it a thing incredible for God to raise the dead? It may further be argued,

§ 5. From the view of man, as the proper subject of reward and punishment. If, therefore, the body did not rise, it would have no part either in reward or punishment. Hence the justice and the mercy of God require the resurrection of the body. The former requires that the wicked should be punished in the same bodies that they sinned in; and the latter makes it necessary that the righteous should be rewarded in the same bodies in which they performed their good actions; and therefore, in order to these different ends, the bodies of both must rise again. Hence says the apostle, "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every man may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it is good or bad." 2 Cor. 5 : 10. But I will proceed to show that the resurrection is not only possible and probable, but,

§ 6. Absolutely certain.

It is not only a truth which God can make good, but a truth which he cannot but make good. As there must be a day of judgment, 2 Cor. 5 : 10, so there not only *may*, but there *must* be a resurrection of the body. But although nature and reason may teach us the possibility and the probability of a resurrection, yet it is divine revelation only that gives us a full assurance of its reality, and a satisfactory account of its nature and properties. Hence, when our Lord reasoned with the Sadducees on the subject, he said, "Ye err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God." Matt. 22 : 29. We have several proofs of this doctrine in the Old Testament.

§ 7. We have a very remarkable and explicit declaration of the resurrection of the dead in the book of Job, 19 : 25–27 ; "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth : and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another ; though my reins be consumed within me."

Many sublime and interesting passages in various parts of this book arrest our attention, but this is one of the most dignified and important. It contains a remarkable declaration of faith and hope in a divine Redeemer, and of a triumphant expectation of a resurrection from the dead, to the immediate vision and everlasting enjoyment of God. That Job is not speaking of a temporal deliverance from his present afflictions, is very evident

From the solemn and impressive manner in which these words are introduced. "O that my words were now written! O that they were printed in a book! that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!" ver. 23, 24. It was his earnest wish that what he was about to utter might be recorded in the most public and

durable manner, not handed down by oral tradition, but *written*, not on a loose leaf, but in a book; not on perishable materials, but engraven in a *rock*, and filled out with lead, according to the several methods then in use of registering remarkable transactions: and observe, my dear Benjamin, that God granted and exceeded his desire; for being written in the sacred Scriptures, his words will continue to the end of time, and be made known and useful to multitudes in all ages and nations. Now, such a passionate preface would become no other matter so well, as the great and all-important truth concerning the Redeemer and a future life.

Further, the word *Goail*, Kinsman, Redeemer, will suit with no person so well as the Messiah, and the spiritual redemption by him. He was promised to be a Redeemer, and Christ the Messiah is said to have redeemed us, and hence the saints on earth and in heaven bless and praise him as their Redeemer. Read carefully the following passages: Isaiah, 49 : 25. 59 : 20. Jer. 31 : 11. Gal. 3 : 13. Eph. 1 : 7. 1 Peter, 1 : 18, 19. Luke, 1 : 68–70. Rev. 5 : 8.

Some of our ancient Rabbins understood the Messiah by the Redeemer. Targum. R. Hackodesh. Aben Ezra. Many of the ancient fathers and most of the modern divines apply it to Christ and the future resurrection.

Besides, it is evident, from several declarations of Job before he uttered this, that all his hope of a temporal recovery was clean gone. See chap. 6 : 11. 7 : 7, 8. 10 : 20. 16 : 22. 17 : 1, 14, 15; and chap. 19 : 10, 11.

We may therefore consider him as saying, I profess and believe that, through the merits of the Messiah my Redeemer, I shall after death be restored to life, and that the very self-same body shall rise; and that in this my own flesh I shall see God my Redeemer; and these eyes shall behold him, and not another; i. e. I shall appear in my own

person, and in this individual fleshly body; and though worms shall destroy it, and my reins shall be consumed within me, yet by faith I am assured of this great and comfortable truth.

§ 8. The Prophet Isaiah also speaks of the future resurrection of the dead in this manner: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Isa. 26 : 19. "It appears from hence," says Bishop Lowth, "that the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead was at that time a popular and common doctrine; for an image which is assumed, to express or represent any thing in the way of allegory or metaphor, whether poetical or prophetical, must be an image commonly known and understood; otherwise it will not answer the purpose for which it is assumed."

This passage is applied by our Rabbins to the resurrection of the dead. Aben Ezra, and Kimchi in loco, Tal. Bab. Sanhed. fo. 90. 2. There are several other passages of similar import in the Old Testament, some of which are referred to in the New Testament, such as Hosea, 13 : 14. Daniel, 12 : 2, &c. No wonder, therefore, that the saints under the Old Testament believed the resurrection of the dead. Hence they took especial care about their *dead bodies* and their burial, not merely out of respect to natural order and decency, but to express their faith of the resurrection. Hence saith the apostle, "By faith Joseph gave commandment concerning his bones." Heb. 11 : 22.

From these passages, and perhaps also from tradition, our people, with the exception of the Sadducees, were fully convinced in the days of our Lord of the resurrection of the body. John, 11 : 24; Matt. 22 : 29–32.

Hence, saith the apostle, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?"

Acts, 26 : 8; with you, O king Agrippa, and the rest that I speak to, who are Jews, and believe the Scriptures, and therefore cannot be averse to this doctrine? On this account also he calls the resurrection "the hope of Israel," Acts, 28 : 20, because it was hoped for by our people, as well as believed.

§ 9. In the New Testament, the resurrection of the dead is taught still more frequently and more explicitly. I will cite but a few passages: "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John, 5 : 28, 29. "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." See also the whole of the 15th chap. 1 Corinthians.

§ 10. The resurrection may also be proved from the several instances mentioned in the Old and new Testaments, of persons raised from the dead. Such as the widow of Sarepta's son by Elijah; the Shunamite's son by Elisha; the man in Elisha's sepulchre; Jairus' daughter; the widow's son; Lazarus, and many at the death of Christ.

§ 11. Another proof of the resurrection of the dead is taken from the resurrection of Christ.

This is Paul's great argument to prove the resurrection of the righteous. "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection, then is Christ not risen. And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your hope is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised. And if

Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." 1 Cor. 15: 12–17. Christ rose as a public person, and as the head of his church; but if the head be risen, all the members must rise also; and therefore he is called "the first fruits of them that sleep," ver. 20. As the first fruit is a sure evidence that the harvest is coming, so the resurrection of Christ is a sure evidence of the rising of the bodies of the saints. Hence Christ is also called the "second Adam," ver. 21, 22. Now, as in the first Adam all his natural posterity died, not only spiritually but corporeally, so in the second Adam all his spiritual seed must be made alive, both spiritually and corporeally.

§ 12. Having proved the reality of the resurrection, I shall now proceed to point out its nature.

I observe first, that

The same identical body that has died, shall rise again.

This is evident from the very name resurrection; for if it were not the same identical body, but a new body, it would be a creation, and not a resurrection. The places from whence the dead will be raised prove the same: "All that are in the graves shall come forth." See Dan. 12: 2; John, 5: 28; Rev. 20: 13. "They shall come forth." Who? They who are in the graves, i. e. men, with regard to their bodies, the same bodies wherein they lived on earth, and which were laid in the graves. "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall quicken your mortal bodies," Rom. 8: 11; so that it is this mortal body which is quickened again; "for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." 1 Cor. 15: 53. Not that another body shall succeed in place of this, but this very body shall be changed, not in substance, but in qualities. The same argument, derived from the justice and the mercy of God, as stated before, proving the necessity of the resurrection of the body, proves also that it must be the same identical body. As our bodies are par-

takers with the soul in good and evil actions, it is just that they should be partakers also in rewards and punishments. This argument holds good both with respect to the righteous and the wicked. We cannot think that God gave bodies to the holy martyrs, only to endure inexpressible tortures and miseries to death for the sake of Christ, and then to perish for ever. Does God require services of the body, and will he not reward those services? It cannot be imagined that the souls of believers should be glorified and not their bodies. They have served God with their bodies, which have been instruments of holiness. Their eyes have flowed with tears for sin, their hands have relieved the poor, their tongues have celebrated God's praises; therefore justice and equity require that their bodies should be crowned as well as their souls; and how can that be, unless the same identical bodies are raised from the dead? And as the same body that served him well will be rewarded, so also the same body that sinned will be punished. For a just God will never punish a body that never was connected with the first Adam, nor was guilty of actual transgression. The identity of the raised body appears also from the pattern; such a body as Christ had in the resurrection and ascension shall the saints have; "for our vile body shall be made like his glorious body." Phil. 3 : 21. Now, the body in which Christ rose, was the same body which was assumed of the virgin, which was nailed to the cross, and laid in the grave; and with the same body he entered into heaven, and there remaineth the same, according to the substance, that was here upon earth, only changed in qualities. So our body remains the same in substance, only freed from the pollutions, and endowed with glorious qualities fit for the heavenly state. As the decays and separations of our bodies do not make them cease to be the same bodies we bring with us into the world; so neither does the change they undergo by death, nor the

glorious qualities wherewith they are endowed when raised again, make them other bodies, for substance, than they are now.

§ 13. The bodies of the righteous will be invested with unspeakable glory. The greatness of this glorious change is inconceivable and indescribable. But although "it doth not yet appear what we shall be, yet we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." 1 John, 3 : 2; for "he shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." Phil. 3 : 21. Of this wonderful change the apostle has given us an epitome in the following manner: "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruption must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory." 1 Cor. 15 : 51–54. In the morning of the resurrection, all deformity and imperfections will be left in the grave.

During the persecution in the reign of Queen Mary, a lame and a blind man being brought to the stake to be burned to death, the former threw away his crutch, and addressing his fellow-sufferer, said, "Be of good comfort, my brother, for my lord of London is our good physician; he will heal us both shortly, thee of thy blindness, and me of my lameness." They shall also be freed from all the necessities of nature: "They shall hunger and thirst no more." Rev. 7 : 16. Moses on the mount was so filled with the glory of God that he needed not the recruits of nature; how much more will the bodies of the saints be filled with the glory and felicity of heaven when raised from the

dead, re-united with their perfect souls, and introduced into the presence of Jesus, to dwell with him for ever! "Then shall the righteous shine forth like the sun." Matt. 13 : 43. I will now proceed to show,

§ 14. That the resurrection of the dead will be general and universal. All that are in their graves, whether godly or ungodly, whether just or unjust, shall be raised up. I am aware, my dear Benjamin, that although our people believe a resurrection from the dead, as I have shown by one of their fundamental articles of faith, yet there is a great variety of opinions amongst the Rabbins with respect to the extent of the resurrection. Some suppose that the pious Israelites will be raised at the coming of the Messiah, and the rest of the nations at the end of the world. According to some, the pious will rise to be rewarded, and the wicked to be punished; but those who have been neither pious nor wicked will not be raised at all. Some expect all Israelites to be raised, except those who disbelieve a resurrection, deny the divine authority of the law, or become epicureans. Others extend the privilege to the pious among the Gentiles, who observe the precepts which the Rabbins say were given to the sons of Noah. But none of the Rabbins allow the resurrection to include all mankind. Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. c. 3. p. 31–35. Huls. Theol. Jud. p. 173. Hoornpeck contra Jud. p. 433–445. 551–553.

But the sacred Scriptures put the subject beyond all doubt. The Lord Jesus Christ himself has taught its universality. "For the hour is coming, in which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John, 5 : 28, 29. The apostle also declared, that "there should be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." Acts, 24 : 15. And John, in the Re

velation, saith, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." Rev. 20 : 13. The earth and the sea are God's stewards, with whom he has intrusted the bodies of men, and when he shall call them to give him an account of their stewardship, they will faithfully discharge their trust, and not one shall be left behind.

§ 15. With respect to the author of the resurrection, I scarcely need to inform you that it is the work of God. He only who could create the world out of nothing, is able to raise the dead out of their graves. Yet it will be proper to observe that this work is ascribed to each of the persons in the blessed Trinity: to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as will appear from the following passages: "For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." John, 5 : 21, 27–29. "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself." Phil. 3 : 20, 21. "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Rom. 8 : 11. As the resurrection of Christ is ascribed to the Father, so also the resurrection of the dead: "And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will raise up us also." 1 Cor. 6 : 14. 2 Cor. 4 : 14.

Christ is "the resurrection and the life;" i. e. the author of the resurrection to life. He is the Prince of life, has the keys of hell and death in his hands; at whose all-powerful and commanding voice, all that are in the graves shall come forth. Christ Jesus is able to perform this glorious

work. He formed the universe with all its rich variety. John, 1 : 3. Col. 1 : 16, 17. He formed the body of man out of the dust of the earth, Gen. 2 : 7 ; and surely the same power which originally formed man's body, can raise it again. Acts, 26 : 8. He has already conquered the world, John, 16 : 33 ; and has triumphed over Satan, Col. 2 : 14, 15 ; and also over death and the grave, Rom. 1 : 4 ; and he shall finally complete the destruction of both. Hosea, 13 : 14. 1 Cor. 15 : 52–54. His power, therefore, is equal to this grand design, and we are assured that he will do it. John, 5 : 28, 29.

God the Holy Ghost has a joint concern with the Father and the Son in this amazing work. The bodies as well as the souls of saints are united to Christ ; by virtue of which union the Spirit of Christ dwells in them ; not in their souls only, but in their bodies also." What ! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you ?" Now, as the union between Christ and his people is not dissolved by death, so neither does the Spirit of God forsake the dead bodies of the saints, or neglect to take care of them ; the dust of the saints is under his peculiar care and guardianship ; and at the last day, the spirit of life from God shall enter into them, and they shall live and stand upon their feet. Ezek. 37.

§ 16. The design of the resurrection, my dear Benjamin, is worthy of God ; it will greatly display the glory of his perfections ; it will advance the happiness of the saints, and make way for the just punishment of the wicked. But, as the resurrection of the dead is inseparably connected with the general judgment and its consequences, the subject of the following letter, I shall close with a few observations.

§ 17. After the proofs produced from the Old Testament of the resurrection of the dead, we should think it almost incredible, my dear Benjamin, that a learned divine should

have asserted "that there is not so much as a plain hint of the resurrection to be found in the Old Testament." Surely the Apostle Paul was of a different opinion on the subject; for he declares that many, before the coming of Christ, suffered martyrdom, "not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection." Now, as faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, it is evident that the word of God must have contained a revelation of the resurrection of the dead: indeed it is abundantly evident that it was the faith of Abraham, Heb. 11: 17; of Joseph, Heb. 11: 22; of Moses, Deut. 32: 39; of David, Psa. 16: 10, 11; of Hannah, 1 Sam. 2: 6; as well as of Job, Isaiah, Daniel, and others.

Let us, however, my dear Benjamin, be thankful for the clearer revelation of this, as well as of all other truths contained in the New Testament; "for Christ hath abolished death, and has brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." 2 Tim. 1: 10.

§ 18. In the next place I would observe, that a firm belief of this doctrine is calculated to support us under afflictions, and deliver us from the fear of death. This was the sweet and supporting cordial of Job under his afflictions, and in the prospect of death: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." Job, 19: 25–27. And the Psalmist says, "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." Psa. 27: 13.

The body, though it drop into the sepulchre, shall revive and flourish as an herb, in the morning of the resurrection. The grave is a bed of dust where the saints sleep, and they shall be awakened by the trump of the archangel.

Our nearest and dearest friends leave us in the grave and depart, but God will never leave nor forsake his people, even in death. As he said to Jacob, "I will go down with thee into Egypt, and I will surely bring thee up again," Gen. 36 : 14; so the Lord will go down with us, as it were, into the grave, and will surely bring us up again. *J. King*, the Bp. of London, ordered in his last will that nothing but the word *Resurgam*, I shall rise again, should be written on his grave-stone. This was a full and just epitaph, because it contains the comfortable doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. *We shall rise*, is sufficient to animate and revive us in the anticipation of death. The believer may look on death and the grave, as on an enemy that lies disarmed and bleeding before his feet; and like Abraham, who rescued Lot from the hands of the kings and took the spoil, so shall the believer, in the morning of the resurrection, receive his body from the grave, to be re-united with his soul. Oh, how great will be the joy of this union! Great was the mutual joy and felicity when good old Jacob embraced his son Joseph; but infinitely greater will be the joy and felicity of the saints, when their bodies and souls shall meet each other in the morning of the resurrection: then they will rejoice with singing, as it was foretold; "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust." Isa. 26 : 19. As our fathers, when they came safely out of the Red Sea, but saw their enemies all dead, sung a new song; so will the redeemed at the morning of the resurrection. "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 15 : 54–57.

The consideration of our rising again, my dear Benjamin, should inspire our minds with invincible courage

and magnanimity, and enable us to submit to the greatest sufferings for the sake of Christ and his cause. Thus the pious sufferers and martyrs of old submitted to be tortured, "not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection," Heb. 11 : 35, i. e. a resurrection to a better life than they were to lose.

§ 19. But let it be remembered, my dear Benjamin, that none can derive comfort from the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, but those who have evidence that they have part in the first resurrection from sin; that they have been quickened by the Spirit of God, regenerated and brought to repent towards God, and to exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He who lies buried in sin, can have no hope of a joyful resurrection. If your body and soul are spiritually dead to sin and alive to God, then you may rejoice in the prospect of the resurrection of a glorious body, which "shall shine as the stars in the kingdom of heaven;" for "when Christ, who is your life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Col. 3 : 4.

§ 20. How awful, tremendously awful the state of the wicked and their future prospects! The time will surely come, when those who now stop their ears and will not hear the voice of God speaking in his word, and by his ministers, shall hear his voice whether they will or not; and shall come out of their graves to the resurrection of con demnation, like a malefactor led to the place of execution. Happy for such if there were no resurrection, that their souls did die as the brute beasts; but let such be assured that there shall be a resurrection of the unjust as well as the just; all in their graves shall come forth, but they shall be raised to damnation, John, 5 : 28, 29; their terror will be great, Rev. 6 : 15–17; and their end dreadful. Matt. 25 : 41. "Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men" to renounce their evil ways, to repent of

their sins, to believe on Jesus Christ, to live devoted to him, and their end will be glorious. May you and I, my dear Benjamin, upon scriptural evidence and happy experience, be enabled to say, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Peter, 1 : 3–5.

Farewell.

Letter II.

THE GENERAL JUDGMENT.

My Dear Benjamin,

Agreeably to promise, I will now invite your attention to the *General Judgment day;* an event, beyond all others, the most solemn and important: the coming of the Messiah to judge the whole world in righteousness, and fix unalterably the eternal condition of every individual of the human race, either in happiness inconceivably great, or misery inexpressibly awful. This truth, however, is denied by the scoffer, 2 Peter, 3 : 3, 4; dreaded by the wicked, Acts, 24 : 25; but believed, nay, earnestly desired by the saints. 2 Tim. 4 : 8. Titus, 2 : 13. Rev. 22 : 20. I will endeavor,

§ 1. To prove the fact, that there will be a general judg-

ment. This may be proved from the relation men stand in to God, as creatures to a Creator, and subjects to a King. He has a right to give them a law, and to make them accountable for a breach of it. Hence saith the apostle, "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Rom. 14 : 12.

§ 2. The certainty of a future judgment appears from the justice of God, which requires it; for it is evident that this attribute is not clearly displayed in the dispensation of things in the present state.

Things seem to be carried on in this world with an unequal balance. The candle of God shines upon the wicked. They that tempt God are delivered. Malachi, 3 : 15. The wicked and disobedient persons are often as happy as if they were rewarded for their iniquity, whilst the innocent and religious are often as miserable as if they were punished for their innocency. Hence Asaph tells us, in the 73d Psalm, that he almost stumbled and fell at the prosperity of the wicked and the adversity of the righteous; till he considered their latter end, their different situations in a future life, when Jehovah's message, sent by the prophet Isaiah, will be fulfilled: "Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Wo unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him; for the reward of his hands shall be given him." Isa. 3 : 10, 11. King Solomon also said in the days of his vanity, "there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedness." Eccl. 7 : 15. But when he had grown wiser by experience, he said, "know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment; for God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Eccl. 11 : 9. 12 : 14.

Diogenes, seeing *Harpalus*, a noted thief, going on prosperously, said, "sure God has cast off the government of

the world, and minded not how things went on here below." But the day is coming, when God will vindicate his justice. "The saints," says Cyprian, "are put into the wine-press, and often the blood of these grapes is pressed out: God will therefore have a day of judgment, that he may reward all the tears and sufferings of his people; they shall have their crown, and throne, and white robes; though they be losers *for* Christ, they shall lose nothing by him."

§ 3. The next proof of a general judgment is derived from the dictates of conscience. God has implanted a presumption and sense of a future judgment in the minds and hearts of men by nature, from whence it is absolutely and eternally inseparable. "Conscience," says Dr. Owen, "is nothing but that judgment which men do make, and which they cannot but make, of their moral actions with reference unto the supreme future judgment of God. Hence the apostle assures us that the heathen, who had nothing but the dim light of nature to guide them, had a conscience that accused them and forced them to own a judgment to come: 'For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another;) in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.'" Rom. 2: 14–16.

Now, what is this private passion, kept in the court of conscience, but a certain forerunner of that general day of judgment when all the world shall be summoned to God's tribunal?

Conscience, awakened by sharp afflictions, by sudden dangers, and the approaches of death, makes a sad detection of past sins, and forecasts cruel things; it cites the offender before the enlightened tribunal of heaven, scourges

with remorse, and makes him feel, even here, the strokes of hell. Though the sin be secret, and the guilty person powerful, not within the reach or cognizance of human justice; yet conscience has a rack within, and causes pain and anxiety, by fearful expectations of judgment to come. Hence the mere hand-writing on the wall made King Belshazzar tremble, as much as Felix did at the preaching of St. Paul. Dan. 5 : 6; Acts, 24 : 25.

§ 4. Another proof of a future judgment is to be derived from some partial instances of judgment which God has already executed.

It is not without a reason that God has sometimes gone out of the usual way of providence. He does it, to intimate unto the world that they are not always to pass at their present rate, but are one day to be called to another account. In great judgments, the "wrath of God is revealed from heaven against the ungodliness of man," Rom. 1 : 16, and an intimation is given of what he will farther do hereafter. For as he "leaves not himself without witness," in respect of his goodness and patience, "in that he doeth good and giveth rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling men's hearts with food and gladness," Acts, 14 : 17; so he gives testimony to his righteousness and holiness, in the "judgments that he executes." Psa. 9 : 16. And thus, in some particular instances, he has given us a pledge of a future judgment. Such was the flood whereby the world was destroyed in the days of *Noah*, which the apostle affirms expressly was a type, to shadow out the severity of God in the last final judgment, 2 Peter, 2 : 5, 3 : 5–7. Of the same nature was his "turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemning them with an overthrow, and making them an *example* unto those that after should live ungodly." 2 Peter, 2 : 6. In like manner the apostle Jude says expressly, "they are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire," ver. 7.

We next appeal for another proof of a general judgment,

§ 5. To the sacred Scriptures. God has not only impressed this truth on the minds of men, and written it in their consciences, and exhibited it by some extraordinary judgments; but he has also clearly and repeatedly revealed it in the word of God.

Before the flood, *Enoch*, in the early age of the world, foretold it. "Behold, the Lord cometh, with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all." Jude, ver. 14, 15. Solomon, under the law, repeats this doctrine; "that every secret thing shall be brought into judgment, whether good or evil," Eccl. 12 : 14; and God himself speaks in the sublimest style of majesty; "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear," Isa. 45 : 23; from whence the apostle infers that "we shall all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ." Rom. 14 : 10, 11. In the Gospel we have distinctly described the person of the Judge, the glorious attendants of his coming, and the manner of his proceedings in that day. Now, the many predictions in Scripture, so clearly and exactly accomplished in the person of Jesus Christ, and by him, give infallible assurance that all his promises and threatenings are equally certain, and shall be fulfilled. As sure as our Savior has come in his humble state, and has accomplished the prophecies of his sufferings; so sure will he come in his glory to judge the world.

§ 6. It may not be improper, my dear Benjamin, to observe that the heathen, although they ridicule the idea of the resurrection of the body, yet believed in the day of judgment. Hence, when Paul preached at Athens both the resurrection and the judgment, they mocked at the former, but said nothing against the latter. Acts, 17 : 32. Notable are the words of Lucian, "God brought men out

of nothing to something, and is in heaven beholding the just and the unjust, and writing down in books every man's actions; and he will recompense all men according to their deeds, in that day which he himself has appointed." And as it respects our own people, you well know that a belief of a future judgment constitutes one of their thirteen fundamental articles of faith, which reads thus: "I believe with a perfect faith that the Creator (blessed be his name) rewards those who observe his commands, and punishes those who transgress them."

§ 7. With respect to the person who is to be judge, it is very evident that it must be Jehovah himself; for he alone is qualified for the work. For it certainly requires infinite knowledge, perfect rectitude, and almighty power.

§ 8. It is however certain, that Jesus Christ is to be the Judge. "And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it was he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." Acts, 10 : 42. There are wise and just reasons for this appointment.

God being invisible in his own nature, has most wisely ordained the last judgment of the world to be transacted by a visible person; because men are to be judged, and the whole process of judgment with them will be for things done in the body. The person appointed for this work is Jesus Christ the Son of God united to the human nature; "for the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." John, 5 : 22, 23.

As there was none found in heaven or on earth who could open and reveal the book of redemption but Jesus Christ; so none but He is fit to open the book of judgment. He only is perfectly qualified to pronounce a just or righteous sentence and carry it into execution. His wisdom is infinite and his power almighty.

§ 9. Christ Jesus was invested with this high office as a

reward for his humiliation and sufferings. The Father "has given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." John, 5 : 27. We must distinguish between the essential and economical power and authority of Christ. The Son of God, considered in his divine nature, has an original power and authority of judgment equal with the Father; but, considered as Mediator, he has a power and authority committed by delegation.

Now Christ Jesus humbled himself so far as to take upon him our nature, endured all the infirmities which that nature was capable of, with all the miseries of the present life, endured all the pains and sorrows due to our sins; and therefore, in regard of his humiliation, did God exalt him; and part of that exaltation was his appointment of Judge both of the living and the dead. Hence saith the apostle, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. 2 : 5–11.

§ 10. Another just and wise reason for this appointment may be, that Christ might be glorified as much in his kingly office as he has been in either of the others as prophet and priest. We find some few glimpses of his kingly office breaking forth during his life-time: such as his riding into Jerusalem in the midst of hosannas: his driving the buyers and sellers out of the temple: the title King of the Jews written on his cross, &c. But these

were only faint beams; on the day of judgment that office will shine in its glory, brighter than the sun in the midst of the firmament; for what were the hosannas of little children in the streets of Jerusalem, to the shouts and acclamations of thousands of angels and ten thousands of saints? What was the driving of the profane out of the temple, to his turning the wicked into hell, and sending out of his angels to gather out of his kingdom every thing that offendeth? What was the title written by his judge, and fixed on the ignominious tree, to the name that shall be seen on his vesture and on his thigh, "King of kings, and Lord of lords?"

§ 11. The manner in which Jesus Christ will appear to judgment, will be glorious, majestic and awful. He will appear in the glory of the Father, Matt. 26 : 64, and his own glory, Luke, 9 : 26. Matt. 24 : 30, with a glorious retinue of all the angels and saints, 2 Thess. 1 : 7. Jude, ver. 14, and be seated on a glorious throne. Matt. 19 : 28 Rev. 20 : 11.

As it is considered the glory of a prince to have many following him as his train, so it will be the glory of Jesus when he comes to judgment, to have all the saints and angels, the glory of creation, to be his attendants.

The Apostle Paul informs us, "that he shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels." 2 Thess. 1 : 7. Lest any should think that the number will be but small, the Apostle Jude informs us that the Lord shall come "with ten thousand of his saints;" and if this be not large enough, the Prophet Daniel informs us that "a thousand ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him;" and that each and all of these shall attend him, we are assured of by the Lord Jesus Christ himself, who said, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." Matt. 25 : 31.

When the law was given from Mount Sinai, the mountain was covered with fire, and the voice of God, as loud as thunder, proclaimed it from the midst of the flames, so that the whole army of the Israelites was prostrate on the plain, struck with a sacred horror and almost dead at the amazing sights and sounds; and if the Lawgiver appeared in such terrible majesty at the proclaiming of the law, how much more when he shall come to revenge the transgressions of it! It is set forth in the Scripture, in the most lofty and magnificent expressions.

The saints shall sit with Christ in judicature, as justices of the peace with the judge. They shall applaud Christ's righteous sentence on the wicked. This, as it will be a great honor to the saints, so it must needs add to the sorrows of the wicked, to see those whom they once derided and hated sit as judges upon them." 1 Cor. 6 : 2. Jude, 13 : 14.

§ 12. The persons to be tried are all men, both good and bad; "for we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ." 2 Cor. 5 : 10.

"It is appointed for all men once to die, and after this the judgment." Heb. 9 : 27. As none can escape death, so none can escape judgment—all men, Isa. 45 : 23, comp. Rom. 14 : 9, 10. Matt. 25 : 31; all the godly, all such as have believed and obeyed the Gospel, Luke, 21 : 36. Rom. 14 : 22. 2 Tim. 4 : 8; all the ungodly and impenitent sinners, Deut. 32 : 35. 2 Peter, 2 : 3. Jude, 15.

It will be such an assize as never was seen before; kings and nobles, counsellors and armies; those who were above trial here below, will have no charter of exemption in that day; they must appear before Christ's tribunal and be tried for their lives. Neither power nor policy can be a subterfuge. They who refused to come to a throne of grace, shall be forced to come to a bar of justice. The dead as well as the living must make their appearance. Rev. 20 : 12. We cannot cite the dead to human tribunals; but at that day the dead will also be called to the bar of Jesus.

Fallen angels also will be judged. They are said "to be reserved unto the judgment of the great day." Jude, 6. They shall receive their final sentence, and be shut up in the prison of hell. Matt. 8 : 29. 25 : 46. 1 Cor. 6 : 3. 2 Peter, 2 : 4. Rev. 20 : 10.

§ 13. The matter for which men will be judged will be their actions, words and thoughts. Prov. 24 : 17. Eccl. 12 : 14. Matt. 12 : 36. Rom. 2 : 16. 1 Cor. 4 : 5. Jude, ver. 15.

All sins, whether secret or open and visible, shall be accounted for; for "God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." Rom. 2 : 16. The sins of omission as well as commission will be charged on the conscience of the sinner. Men are generally more sensible of the guilt contracted by sins committed than by duties omitted; but in that awful day they will be convinced of their error; for "to him who knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is a sin." James, 4 : 7. The Judge himself will say, "I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not." Matt. 25 : 42, 43.

The neglect of improving all the means, advantages and opportunities of doing or receiving good, will be a great part of that judgment. The Lord called his servants to an account for the talents committed to their trust, and required profit in proportion to their number and worth; and he who had buried his talent, though safely kept and not wasted, yet, because he had not improved it, was severely punished.

§ 14. The rule of judgment is the Divine constitution. "We are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judg-

ment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds." Rom. 2 : 2–6.

The heathen will be judged by the light of nature: "For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law." Rom. 2 : 12. Our people the Jews will be judged by the law of Moses: "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust." John, 5 : 45. "As many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law." Rom. 2 : 12. Those who are favored with the means of grace will be judged by the Gospel. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." John, 12 : 48. Saints will be judged by the book of life. Luke, 10 : 20. Rev. 3 : 5. 20 : 12, 15.

§ 15. The evidence produced in judgment will be abundantly clear and convincing. The temper of divine justice is very observable in particular judgments recorded in Scripture. In the first process of justice on earth, we read that God made inquiry of Adam, "Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?" Gen. 3 : 11; and by palpable evidence convinced him before he condemned him. Thus, before the fiery vengeance upon the wicked cities, the Lord said to Abraham, "Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it that is come unto me." Gen. 18 : 20, 21. Thus we read of the profane king of Babylon, Belshazzar, "that he was weighed in the balance and found wanting," Daniel, 5 : 27.

before he was sentenced to be deprived of his kingdom and life. And in the last day the righteousness of God's proceedings shall be universally manifest and magnified. It is therefore called "the day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God." Rom. 2 : 5.

In allusion to the proceedings in human judgments, where the information and charges are produced from writings for the conviction of the accused, the Scripture informs us that the evidence is to be produced by opening the books.

We read that God keeps a book of remembrance. Mal. 3 : 16.

On the day of judgment, contrary to the practice of human tribunals, the Judge himself will be a witness against the criminals. For thus says the Lord, "I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me." Mal. 3 : 5. Then shall the Lord Jesus Christ say "unto them at the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them saying, Verily, I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." Matt. 25 : 41–45.

The omniscience of God will give most convincing evidence to all our works. "All things are marked and open to his eyes with whom we have to do" in judgment. Heb.

4 : 13. He discovered the sacrilege of *Achan*, the lie of *Gehazi*, and the deceit of Ananias. Saul's disobedience in sparing the *spoils* of the Amalekites, devoted to destruction, had the colorable pretence of piety, and a sacrifice was laid on the altar; and David's murder of *Uriah* was imputed to the chance of war as a sufficient excuse; but though they might have deceived others, they could not deceive God. Hence says the wise man, "Doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works." Prov. 24 : 12.

Another book that will be laid open is every man's own conscience.

Now the records of conscience are often obliterated, and the sins written therein are forgotten; but on the day of judgment they will appear in so clear an impression, that the wicked will be inexcusable to themselves, and conscience will subscribe to the sentence of condemnation, and the sinner become speechless.

§ 16. Other numerous witnesses will appear. Not as if God, who knoweth all things, wants information; but for the public conviction of the wicked, many of their own friends and ministers will have to appear against them.

The righteous will bear witness against the ungodly. They will rehearse the several circumstances which prove their earnest desire and endeavor to reclaim and reform them. They will repeat the advice and counsel which they once tendered them; they will relate how often they reproved them, how earnestly they entreated and besought them, and how affectionately and importunately they prayed for them.

§ 17. Yea, even the wicked will bear witness against their wicked companions. Luke, 16 : 27, 28.

In this world, fellow-sinners usually conceal one another's wickedness, restrained by their own obnoxiousness

to punishment; but all that have been jointly engaged in the commission of sin will impeach each other. In all sins of combinations, the inferior instruments will accuse their directors and tempters for their pernicious counsel; like Adam, who laid the blame upon Eve, and Eve upon the serpent. This awful subject, my dear Benjamin, reminds me of the story about the *Lucian Lamp*, of which a heathen writer relates thus: "That the soul of a very guilty wretch was after death arraigned before one of the severe judges below. At his trial, because his atrocious crimes were done in secret, he stood upon his defence, denying all. The judge demanded his lamp to be produced, that was an eye-witness of his wickedness. The lamp appeared, and being demanded what it knew of him, answered with a sigh, 'O that I had been conscious of nothing, for even now the remembrance of his villanies makes me to tremble. I wish my light had been extinct, that the oil that maintained it had quenched it. But I burned with disdain and cast about some sparks to fire his impure bed, and was grieved that my little flame was so weak as not to consume it. I said within myself, if the sun saw these villanies it would be eclipsed, and leave the world in darkness. But I now perceive why I was constrained to give light to him, that, being a secret spy of his uncleanness, his thefts and cruelties, I might reveal them.' "

§ 18. Devils too will appear as witnesses against the wicked.

As it respects the righteous, Satan, the accuser of the *brethren*, will be silenced by the Judge himself, who is their advocate. This we have represented to the prophet Zechariah; "Joshua the high priest," a type of the church, "standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him: and the Lord said unto Satan, the Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee." Zech.

3 : 1, 2. But he will prevail against the wicked. Perhaps this is intimated in the words of David, (which ought to be considered more as a prediction than an imprecation,) "Let Satan stand," or rather Satan shall stand "at his right hand; when he is judged, let him be," or he shall be, "condemned." Psa. 109 : 6, 7.

Devils are able to rehearse long catalogues of their crimes; they can bring to light their secret and unseen practices, and they have malice enough to urge them home against them. Devils will then accuse those whom they now tempt; and they who now solicit them to vice, will appear and prove against them the commission of it. How great the madness, my dear Benjamin, to give ear to diabolical suggestions! For this false and treacherous friend, after he has prevailed with souls to commit sin, will make good the charge which he will bring against them for it, and torment them for what they have done.

§ 19. With respect to the trial itself, we may be sure that it will be impartial. Jesus Christ will do every man justice; "he will judge the world with righteousness." The *Thebans* represented their judges as blind and without hands; blind, that they might not respect persons; without hands, that they might take no bribes. In human courts, the judges sometimes extend and amplify, sometimes contract or smother the evidence, and are more rigorous or favorable in their sentence, as they are biased towards the persons before them. But the righteous judge of the world is incapable of being inclined to favor or severity upon such base motives. Christ's sceptre is a sceptre of righteousness. He is no respecter of persons. Rom. 2 : 11. 1 Peter, 1 : 17. It is not nearness of blood that prevails; many of his kindred will be condemned; nor is it a glowing profession; many will go to hell with Christ in their mouth. Matt. 7 : 22. Things will not be carried on in that day by parties, but weighed in a most just balance.

There are no fees taken in that court, nor will the judge be bribed by a hypocritical tear or a Judas' kiss. "The rich and the poor shall then meet together without distinction, before God the Maker and Judge of them all." "There shall be neither Greek nor Jew, Barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free;" but he that has done wrong shall receive for the wrong he has done; and there is no respect of persons."

§ 20. As there will be no partiality to persons, so there will be a perfect distinction of causes, and every man be judged according to his works, the tenor of good works and the desert of bad. The apostle assures us that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap: he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Gal. 6 : 7, 9. "To them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil; of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God." Rom. 2 : 7–11.

"It is more rational," says the sweet writer, Dr. Bates, "to conceive that things may be congealed by the heat of fire, or turned black by whiteness, than that the least act of injustice can be done by the righteous Lord. The apostle rejects with extreme detestation the blasphemous charge of unrighteousness in God's proceedings: "Is God unrighteous that taketh vengeance? God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?" Rom. 3 : 5, 6. He may as soon renounce his nature and cease to be God—for, as such, he is necessarily judge of the world—as violate his own perfections in his judicial proceedings with us."

§ 21. Every individual will be perfectly convinced of the fairness of the proceedings, and the justice of the sen-

tence. Not only will "every mouth be stopped, and the sinner become speechless," but every one will be convinced that the sentence is just. The sinner himself shall clear God of injustice; God's taking vengeance is doing justice. Sin makes God angry, but it cannot make him unrighteous. The wicked shall drink a sea of wrath, but not a drop of injustice. If Christ should say, "Sinner, what apology canst thou make for thyself? Are not thy sins written in the book of conscience? Hadst thou not that book in thine own keeping? Who could interline it?" The sinner, being self-condemned, would clear his Judge and say, "Lord, though I be condemned, yet I have no wrong done me; thou art clear when thou judgest." Psa. 51 : 4.

§ 22. Thus, my dear Benjamin, I have endeavored in as brief a manner as possible to prove the certainty of a general judgment, pointed out the Judge in his person and in the manner of his appearance, and mentioned some of the most important circumstances connected with the trial, such as relate to the subject, to the rule and evidence, and the nature of the trial itself; you will doubtless be anxious to hear of the sentence to be pronounced and its consequences, which I propose to describe in my next letter. In the meantime let me beg of you to read carefully and prayerfully the 25th chapter in St. Matthew's Gospel, from ver. 31–46. I am aware, my dear Benjamin, that there are a variety of questions that present themselves to the mind whilst contemplating this all-important subject, such as respecting the place, the time, &c. &c. which the limits of this letter will not permit me to notice; but as the event is certain, and will be universal, decisive and eternal as to its consequences, let us rather be concerned for the welfare of our immortal interests, flee to the refuge set before us, improve our precious time, depend on the merits of the dear Redeemer, and adhere to the duties of the divine word, that we may be found of him in peace. Farewell.

Letter III.

THE MISERY OF THE WICKED.

My Dear Benjamin,

§ 1. Agreeably to promise, I will now notice the sentences pronounced and their consequences. At the close of my last letter I recommended to your serious attention the 25th chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, from 31st verse, where you will have observed that our blessed Lord has given us a lively description of the solemn process of the final judgment and the different sentences that shall be passed on the righteous and on the wicked. To the righteous, those at his right hand, he will say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." But to the wicked, those at his left hand, he will say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Matt. 25 : 34, 41. And these sentences will be immediately executed; for it follows: "these," i. e. the wicked, "shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." In the present letter I propose to consider the nature and duration of the misery of the wicked.

§ 2. With respect to its nature, you must not expect, my dear Benjamin, more than some general account. A particular and accurate description of that misery can only be given by those miserable wretches that already feel it. The torments of hell, as well as the joy of heaven, are yet in a great measure unrevealed, and we can then only expect any accurate notion of them when the veil of mortality is rent, and the great objects of an unseen state are presented to our view.

The nature of the future punishment and misery of the wicked has usually been divided into the punishment of loss, and the punishment of sense. In describing the former, viz. the punishment of loss, I would observe,

§ 3. That the wicked will be for ever debarred from the blessed presence of God, the only fountain of life and light, of joy and blessedness: "Depart," says the Judge, "from me," in whose "presence is fullness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore." All attempts to reclaim and reform them will cease for ever. No invitations to return, no offers of pardon and peace, no merciful entreaties to accept of them shall be any more addressed to them. All cries for pity and commiseration (how importunate soever) are now fruitless, and come too late, for ever.

§ 4. Further observe, my dear Benjamin, that as the wicked and impenitent will be debarred from the beatific vision of God, so likewise they will be for ever excluded from his heavenly court, the place where he manifests his ravishing glory and communicates his felicitating love to all the happy attendants of his exalted throne.

"They must be for ever shut out," says the silver-tongued Mr. Boyce, "from that bright habitation of holiness, and become perpetual exiles from those amiable mansions of light, into which none but the children of light shall be received. And consequently they must be thrust out of the society of the saints in light, and excluded from the desirable conversations and entertainments, from the noble work and the satisfying joys, from the transcendent perfections and blessedness of that blessed and holy community. The gates of the heavenly Jerusalem shall be for ever barred upon them. An unpassable gulf shall cut off all possibility and hope of returning to these forfeited regions of endless bliss, Luke, 16 : 26. Rev. 21 : 8, 27. While they behold those holy souls, whose serious piety

they here scorned and despised, admitted with honor and triumph to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, with the patriarchs, prophets and apostles, in the kingdom of heaven, they shall see themselves thrust out, to their eternal shame and confusion. Luke, 13 : 28, 29. Their eyes shall never behold the beauties of the heavenly world, their ears not hear the triumphant songs of the celestial choir; not one drop from those ever-flowing rivers of divine pleasure and joy shall be afforded to cool their inflamed tongue."

§ 5. The next part of their misery is the punishment of sense. This is expressed in the sentence pronounced under the notion of *fire*. "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." As it is usual for the Scriptures to represent to us the felicity and joy of heaven by what is most pleasing and glorious to our senses, as by a feast, a kingdom, a crown, a marriage, &c. so it is no wonder that the miseries of hell should also be set forth by what is most dismal and terrible; or what occasions the most exquisite pain and torture; as by the unquenchable fire, the never-dying worm, outer darkness, chains of darkness, an infernal prison.

The metaphor fire is frequently used to represent the torments and miseries of the wicked. "Who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? who shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Isa. 33 : 14. Fire, brimstone, and an horrible tempest are said to be the portion of the wicked's cup. Psa. 9 : 6. Jude calls it "the vengeance of eternal fire," ver. 7; and in Revelation it is called "the lake of fire and brimstone, whose torment is for ever and ever." Rev. 20 : 10. The metaphor fitly represents to us the anguish of an accusing, despairing conscience, the tormenting sense of the inexorable wrath of God, and the rage of their own unsatisfied lusts.

§ 6. The bitter anguish and torment of an accusing and

despairing conscience is that which our Lord chiefly intended by the "worm that never dieth, and the fire that never goes out." Mark, 9 : 44, 46. Conscience, in its enraged reflections, will be to the sinner as a worm that is perpetually gnawing his vitals, like a flame that is incessantly scorching his inward parts. And doubtless Christ refers to this part of the misery of the damned, when he so often speaks of hell as the place where there is "weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth," Matt. 13 : 42, 50; expressions that denote the most piercing grief arising from the utmost degree of desperation and rage. And no wonder that this should be the wretched condition of the wicked, "when we consider," says Dr. Boyce, "that wherever a condemned sinner turns his thoughts, he finds nothing but what administers to his inward vexation and despair. If he look *backward* to this world he has left, and the life he has here led, what abundant matter occurs of bitter and grievous reflections; if he reviews his actions, what a scene of perpetual and shameful folly appears to his eye; how numberless, detestable and hateful sins stare him in the face, the remembrance whereof fills him with horror and confusion! If he look back on his earthly enjoyments and sensual delight, and especially on the past momentary pleasures of sin; alas! they are fled and gone, and have left nothing but a tormenting sting behind. If he reflect on the compassionate offers of divine grace, and his merciful methods to recover and save him; alas! these slighted offers are now recalled, and shall never be tendered more; those opposed methods are finally frustrated; and the day of abused patience and grace is at an end, and the day of final retribution and vengeance has now succeeded it. If he look *upwards*, what can he there fix his thoughts upon but that righteous God, whose long-suffering he has now turned into inexorable fury; that blessed society from whose converse he is perpetually banished;

that heavenly Father and glory, which once indeed was proposed to his choice, but the proposal being ungratefully despised and rejected, he is now by a peremptory sentence eternally excluded from it!

If he look *round about* him, whom has he to commune with, but those accursed fiends that will now prove his tormentors, as they were once his tempters; and those other companions of sin here on earth, the very sight of whom calls his past guilt to his unwelcome remembrance? If he look *forward*, he sees nothing before him that can minister any hope of relief; on the contrary, the certain prospect of a miserable eternity does, above all things, amaze and confound him. So that his own uneasy, perplexed thoughts are a continual spring of new anguish and terror to him. He carries a perpetual hell in his own conscience, whose unanswerable challenges, and wounding reproaches, and direful lashes are intolerable. Of this we have some lively representations in the horrid agonies and unsupportable fury of some despairing sinners on earth, when they had nothing left them but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation." I mean such as Francis Spira and others, that have been driven to the utmost desperation; (not to mention the scriptural examples of Cain and of a Judas;) and we may reasonably suppose that these bitter reflections of an enraged, accusing conscience, will be more restless and grievous in that future state, where wretched sinners will have nothing else to entertain their busy thoughts.

§ 7. Another ingredient of the misery of the condemned, expressed by the metaphor fire, is the affrighted sense of the inexorable displeasure and wrath of an incensed God. The Apostle Jude calls it the "vengeance of eternal fire." And God is said to be a consuming fire. Deut. 4 : 34. Again, the apostle speaks of a "certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the

adversaries." Heb. 10 : 27. God's wrath against his adversaries is frequently compared to fire, on account of its irresistible, tormenting, and devouring nature. How terrifying, my dear Benjamin, must the apprehension of an Almighty God be to a condemned sinner that has now fallen into his avenging hand, when he considers he can no way resist his power, nor escape the utmost effects of his tremendous indignation. How, indeed, a just and sin-avenging God will execute his wrath, is what we are now wholly ignorant of; but sure we are, those must be extremely miserable that are remedilessly exposed to it. Well might the Psalmist say, "Who knoweth the power of thine anger? According to thy fear so is thy wrath." Psa. 90 : 11. Our fears, under the strong alarm of a guilty conscience, are next to boundless and infinite; but the wrath that is armed with infinite power must needs exceed our most unbounded fears themselves. With what deep wounds will the sword of justice pierce the sinner's heart, when wielded by an irresistible, omnipotent hand! How inconceivably dismal must be the case of those "vessels of wrath fitted for destruction," on whom so terrible a majesty resolves "to show his wrath, and to make his power known." Rom. 9 : 22.

§ 8. Permit me, dear Benjamin, to mention one more ingredient of the future punishment of the wicked, viz. the continued rage of their own unsatisfied lusts. Those impure and brutish desires, which in the condemned sinner will be as vehement as ever, and must needs create a continual torment to one that can find no objects to gratify them with; and their impure flames are fitly compared to a fire, a fire that will furiously prey upon the soul itself, when it has no external fuel to feed upon. What a torment must it be, to burn always in the flames of his own unquenchable desires, and to covet perpetually that vile fuel of his former luxury, pride, intemperance, lust, covetousness, and other inordinate

affections, tnat are now withdrawn for ever! in a word, to find all those things vanished on which his hopes and happiness were placed, and to which his heart yet inseparably cleaves, yet he despairs ever to enjoy them. This will be a most just but truly dreadful part of the sinner's punishment. Thus, my dear Benjamin, I have endeavored to give you a general scriptural account of the punishment and misery of the wicked; but I must adopt the words of the apostle, and say, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive" the terrible things that a righteous God has prepared for them who finally hate, and impenitently provoke and disobey him.

§ 9. From the consideration of the nature of the punishment of the wicked, I proceed to invite your most serious attention to its duration. This our Lord himself has told us is to be eternal: "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." Matt. 25 : 46. The words everlasting and eternal in this passage are synonymous, and signify an endless duration. It is much to be regretted that the translators used two different words, when the original word is the same in both places. Dr. Doddridge says, "As the original word *Aionion* is the same in both places, I thought it proper to use the same word in the translation of both." As none disputes the happiness of the saints to be eternal, without interruption and without end, so none ought to doubt that the duration of the punishment and misery of the wicked will be without intermission and without end. Besides, we are told that "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever," Rev. 14 : 11; and our blessed Lord also declareth that "their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched." Mark, 9 : 44, 48. In the greatest miseries of this life, God is graciously pleased to allow some intervals of rest; but of those in hell it is said, "they

have no rest, day nor night." Rev. 14 : 11. The rich man in hell asked but a momentary alleviation of his torture, when he desired that Lazarus might be sent "to dip the tip of his finger in water to cool his tongue;" but even this was denied him. It is the immutability of the future state that bespeaks it eternal. They can no more flee from the bitter reflections of an enraged conscience, than flee from themselves; and no more interrupt the misery that springs from them, than extinguish their life itself.

§ 10. As their misery is without intermission, so also it is without end. This ingredient will inconceivably increase their anguish. If, when a duration equal to many millions of ages were past, condemned sinners might have any assurance of redemption from their misery, even that slender hope would be some, though a small mitigation of the horror of their state. It were some relief to their torments to foresee any possible end of them, at however remote a distance.

But oh! what an amazing and insupportable thought, that all the vast space of time that arithmetic can compute or their thoughts measure, is but as a moment in comparison to eternity; and when that is passed, their misery will be as far from ending as ever! Oh! that solemn and awful sound, Eternity! eternity! It is related by several authors, of a lady who was fond of gayety, that after spending the afternoon and evening with a party at cards and other vain amusements, she returned home late at night, and found her waiting-maid diligently reading a religious book; happening to look over her shoulder, she saw what it was, and said, "Poor, melancholy soul, why do you sit so long poring upon your book?" After this she retired to bed, but could not sleep; she lay sighing and weeping for several hours. Being repeatedly asked by her servant what was the matter, she burst into a flood of tears, and said, "Oh! Mary, it was one word that I saw in your book which

troubles me; there I saw the word Eternity." The Lord grant, my dear Benjamin, that we may so consider the word Eternity, that it may not be a trouble, but a pleasure unto us. May we flee for refuge to Jesus, as the man-slayer to the city of refuge, and the great High Priest of our profession will receive and defend us from the sword of the avenger; "for there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," Rom. 8 : 1; and on that day, when the good Shepherd shall "divide his sheep from the goats," he will say unto us, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Then, with all the "righteous, we shall enter into life eternal." Matt. 25 : 46. The nature of that felicity will be the subject of the next letter.

Farewell.

Letter IV.

THE FUTURE HAPPINESS OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

Beloved Brother,

Agreeably to promise, I now invite your attention to the happiness of the righteous, or the felicity of heaven. Heaven is considered as a place in which the Omnipotent Deity is said to afford a nearer and more immediate view of himself, and a more sensible manifestation of his glory than in the other parts of the universe.

§ 1. I freely acknowledge, my dear Benjamin, that the felicity of the righteous, as well as the misery of the wicked, far exceeds our comprehension. We are, at present, at

a great distance from those superior regions of eternal light, and there is a thick veil of flesh that hides the glory of them from our eyes. We have, indeed, a clear and satisfying assurance of an endless felicity, and some notices in general of its nature; but as to the particulars of it, it is a glory yet to be revealed, and we cannot expect a clear and distinct view of it till we enter within the veil, and are admitted into the heavenly sanctuary. Should the external glory of the heavenly state be laid open to our naked view, it would be too dazzling a sight for weak mortality to bear. If the Israelites could not endure to behold the face of Moses when it shone, upon his descent from the mount; and if the disciples of our Lord could not bear the sight of his transfigured body without great confusion and fear; how much more should we be confounded at the view of that celestial brightness, of which this was but an emblem or glimpse.

Yet, though we cannot here expect any adequate conception of the heavenly state, we are not left wholly in the dark. The Holy Spirit has, in condescension to our weakness, described it to us in expressions which allude to present and sensible things. Thus the future blessedness of the righteous is often represented under the notion of a kingdom, a throne, a crown, a house and city; sometimes it is represented as a great treasure, a pearl of great price, and a glorious inheritance; sometimes it is represented under the emblem of white robes, palms, or under the similitude of a great supper or marriage-feast; it is called the heavenly paradise, full of light, life and glory. By these, and other affecting, sensible allusions, does the Spirit of God insinuate to our minds some sensible thought of the transcendent honor and dignity, the complete perfection and excellency, the ravishing and truly satisfying pleasure and joy of that happy state. For method's sake, I will, however give you a brief description of the character of the righ-

teous, and then consider their happiness both in the negative and positive.

§ 2. With respect to the righteous, the Scriptures declare "there is none righteous" on earth, "no not one," i. e. in himself. To be righteous, in the proper and strict sense of the word, is to keep the law *perfectly*, which no mere man ever did, and no fallen man ever can; for "all have sinned;" sin being "the transgression of the law." The righteous, therefore, who shall enter into life eternal, are not such in themselves, but are dealt with by God as such, through the righteousness of Christ put to their account. This righteousness Christ wrought out by his perfect obedience, even unto death; and it is revealed in the Gospel; and when the sinner is convinced that he wants it, and must perish without it, he comes to God for it, and God gives it to him; he receives it by faith, puts it on and wears it, lives and dies in it; and being "found in Christ," he is admitted in this wedding garment to the marriage-supper of the Lamb.

§ 3. I proceed to consider the negative part of the happiness of the righteous, which consists in an entire exemption and freedom from all evils, both moral and natural, both those of sin and misery; they will be freed from all inward and spiritual evils, such as the guilt of sin, Isaiah, 33 : 24; the depravity of their nature, the temptations of Satan, from divine desertion, Isaiah, 57 : 8; from fear of the wrath of God and the punishment of sin; from all distresses arising from connection with others, such as from the sufferings of friends, country, or the church, or from the sins of others. Here the relics of indwelling sin make our life a tedious warfare, the violent struggles of this body of death often extort such bitter complaints of our wretched condition as that of the apostle, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. 7 : 24. These spiritual enemies within us are like those in

the Israelites' bodies, "as thorns in our sides and pricks in our eyes;" they wound a gracious soul in its most quick and sensible part; but in the heavenly Canaan all these cursed remains of sin are entirely extinguished. There "the spirits of the just made perfect" have no more occasion to lament the sinful darkness and distraction of their minds, the rebellion of their unruly passions, the irregularity of their desires, the carnality and dullness of their affections, the weakness of their graces, and the woful defects and failures of their best obedience: happy they whose wearisome warfare is ended in perfect victory and eternal triumph.

§ 4. And as the saints in glory are freed from indwelling sin, the temptations of the world, and the assaults of Satan; so also they are freed from all the evil consequences of sin. All the spiritual doubts, fears and sorrows will be buried in the grave of sin, to rise no more. In those regions of perfect light and purity there are no clouds to intercept the ravishing beams of divine love; no spiritual storms of desertion to disturb the serenity and calm of an innocent soul; no frowns on the face of our Heavenly Father to awaken our jealous fears; no anguish of an accusing conscience to alloy our spiritual joy. There we shall hear no more such grievous complaints as now sometimes drop from the lips of a desponding Asaph: "Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favorable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Does his promise fail for evermore? Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" Psa. 77 : 7–9. Or as those of Heman, "Why castest thou off my soul? why hidest thou thy face from me? I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: while I suffer thy terrors I am distracted." Psa. 88 : 14, 15. The perfect love of heaven will entirely cast out all relics of such disquieting fear. 1 John, 4 : 18.

§ 5. Further, the saints enter those peaceful mansions, where "the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." Job, 3 : 17. They are freed from the noise of this malignant world, where the voice of scoffing Ishmaelites, cursing Shimeis, and railing, blasphemous Rabshakehs, is heard no more; where there is no terrible inquisitorial tribunal, no treacherous and bloody massacres, no fire and faggot, no prison or gallies to be dreaded any more; they are landed safe on the shore of eternity, from whence they can behold, with a fearless eye, the storms of this tempestuous sea whereon they have so long been tossed, and from which they have now happily escaped.

§ 6. The saints in heaven are freed from evils and sufferings; hence heaven is called a place of rest; they are freed from all bodily and outward sufferings, from disease and pain: "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." Rev. 21 : 4; Isaiah, 25 : 8, 23, 24. There will be no more complaint of poverty or want; they will have a glorious inheritance, and be as rich as heaven can make them. He who has a promise of an estate after the expiration of a few years, though at present he is poor, comforts himself with this, that he will shortly have his estate. "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe all tears from their eyes." Rev. 7 : 16, 17. They shall be freed also from toil and hard labor; "all things," says the wise man, "are full of labor." Eccl. 1 : 8. God has made a law, "in the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat thy bread." But death gives the believer a discharge from all his labor. Rev. 14 : 13. Nor shall they any more sustain the loss of comforts and enjoyments. In

this present life, many things occasion sorrow, law-suits, treachery of friends, disappointment of hopes, and the loss of property. The world is a "Bochim," i. e. a place of weeping: Rachel wept for her children. Some grieve that they have no children, others because they are undutiful. Thus we spend our years in sighing; but in heaven all tears will be wiped away. Then Christ's spouse will put off her mourning; for how can the children of the bridegroom mourn when he is with them? Thus, my dear Benjamin, you will easily perceive that even the negative part of the happiness of the righteous, the happiness that flows from the absence of the evils of sin and corruption, exceeds all the pleasures this world can afford. As none feel more the pleasures of health than those just recovering from long and painful maladies; as none prize more highly the sweets of liberty than those that are rescued from the miseries and hardships of captivity; so the fresh remembrance of all the afflictions that we have passed through during this short scene of mortality and misery will greatly enhance the joys of our happy deliverance from them, and give a sweeter relish to the positive part of the future blessedness.

§ 7. I will therefore proceed to the consideration of the positive part of the happiness of the righteous. This is called by the Lord Jesus Christ, "Eternal Life." Matt. 25 : 46. And in many other parts of the Scripture the future happiness is called *Life*, by way of eminence, as opposed to this present state of mortality, and denotes the affluence of all that can render our being and state truly desirable. Matt. 7 : 14. 19 : 17. John, 3 : 36. 10 : 10. The blessedness of their heavenly and happy life results partly

From the perfection of our nature, and the most vigorous exercise of our perfected powers upon the noblest and most agreeable objects. How great will be the change with respect to the soul and all its rational powers! The perfection of our knowledge is by the Apostle Paul plainly in-

timated to be the noble and peculiar privilege of our heavenly state. 1 Cor. 13 : 10, 12. Our knowledge will then be large in its compass and extent, and conversant about the most glorious objects, the contemplation and discovery whereof is capable of yielding the highest satisfaction to our minds. We shall then fully "know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent," whom to know fully, is indeed "life eternal." John, 17 : 3.

§ 8. Next to the understanding, is the perfection of the will, as another source of happiness. Our will will be entirely moulded into a sinless conformity to the nature and will of God; this being the happy and necessary result of our perfect vision of him. 1 John, 3 : 2. 2 Cor. 3 : 18. Oh! happy souls, whose wills are thus entirely moulded into the perfect will of God! If the perfect fulfilling of our wills can make us happy, those must needs be so who have no will different from his; for his will shall always stand.

As the philosophers say, the reason that iron cleaves to the load-stone so constantly, is because the pores of both are alike, and there are affluxes and emanations that slide through and unite them together; so will be this magnetism; our wills shall perfectly fall in with the divine will, and nothing will appear good to us but what is good in God's esteem; so that we shall then need no threatenings to drive us, no promises to draw us; but divine goodness will so attract us, that we shall be naturalized to God and goodness; and be no more able to turn off from that ineffable sweetness than the loadstone to point to the west.

Here grace is very imperfect. We cannot write a copy of holiness without blotting it. Believers are said to receive but the first fruits of the Spirit. Rom. 8 : 23. But in heaven the saints shall arrive at perfection. Their life clear, their sanctity perfect, their sun shall be in his meridian splendor; they need not then pray for an increase of grace; they will then love Christ as much as they would love him,

and as much as he desires them to love him. They shall be then, in respect of holiness, as the angels of God.

§ 9. As the understanding will be light without darkness, and the will conformed to that knowledge, so all the powers of the soul will be engaged in cheerful exercise. Here our souls are miserably impotent, weak and sluggish, being imprisoned in a frail and feeble body, and clogged with an unwieldy lump of clay. But how great will be the vigor and activity of the soul, when disencumbered from this load of flesh and re-united to a body whose agility is suited to the quickness of its motions! We shall then be like the angels, those swift messengers of the heavenly King; we shall then, indeed, in the highest sense, "mount up with wings as eagles; we shall run and not be weary, walk and not faint." Isaiah, 40 : 13.

§ 10. The perfection of our nature relates to our body as well as our souls. At death the happiness of the righteous is merely begun; but, after the general resurrection and judgment, it will be completed. One part of the righteous still remains the spoils of death and the prey of the grave; till then, that last enemy continues his seeming victory and triumph, our bodies being detained as captives in his dark prison and ignominious chains; and it is not till this last enemy is conquered, and our bodies rescued from his dominion and power, that "mortality is entirely swallowed up of life," and the happiness of a glorified saint fully consummated. The glory and nature of this change, as far as revealed to us in Scripture, I have already considered in a former letter on the general resurrection; and therefore proceed to mention another part of the happiness of the righteous, arising from

§ 11. The society of the heavenly inhabitants. Man is a social creature, framed for converse, and capable of relishing all the entertaining pleasures of it. The more excellent and communicative those are with whom we con-

verse, the greater are the advantages of it; now there is every thing in the heavenly state that can conspire to render the converse of it beneficial and pleasurable to us. There we shall be admitted to the most intimate and endeared communion with the blessed God, the fountain of all light and life, love and joy. We shall then satiate our souls with the "fullness of joy" that is in his beatific "presence," and let them run adrift in that "ocean of pleasure that is at his right hand for evermore." All the influences and effects of the felicitating love of God which we now partake of, are but like the glimmering light of the sun that pierces through some crevices of the closed windows. But there, all obstruction shall be removed, our own capacities enlarged, and we shall with open eyes behold the face of glorifying love for ever. Oh! what a life of inconceivable and unknown delight we shall live for ever, in the presence and bosom, and under the incessant influence of his diffusive, eternal love, the true source of all perfection and blessedness! Besides, my dear Benjamin, how great will be the joy and felicity of the righteous, when admitted to the presence and converse of the exalted Redeemer, as clothed in our nature. If good old Simeon was so transported at the sight of our blessed Lord in the flesh, that he was willing to close his eyes on this world when he had "beheld the salvation of God," Luke, 2: 28, 30, how much more ravishing then will it be to behold him enthroned in heaven, when he has completed that great work of the salvation of his Israel which he here came to lay the foundation of! If Peter, when he beheld but a transient glimpse of the glory of Christ in the transfiguration on the mount, felt such an astonishing transport as made him forget the world and himself, and speak he knew not what; how much more surprising and ravishing will his glory appear, when we see it in its brightest lustre, and we ourselves shall feel the transforming efficacy of that glorious sight, to render us like to him! 1 John, 3 : 2.

The righteous will also be blessed with the company of angels and saints. Although the nature, order, and rank of the angels is superior to that of men, yet they will not disdain our company. Those that now account themselves our fellow-servants will not refuse to make us their happy associates in heaven. Those that now rejoice in our conversion will then triumph in our final salvation. There also we shall be admitted to the society of the patriarchs, prophets and apostles, and all those eminent servants of God who, in every successive age, have shone as lights in this dark world, and are now translated to a higher orb. There we shall also regain the society of our Christian relations and friends that have been our fellow-soldiers here in the same spiritual warfare, but are now possessed of the immortal crown, and have before us entered into everlasting rest. O the joyful meeting, when all the children of God that were dispersed abroad shall be gathered into one general assembly and church! when the vast convention of all whose names are listed in the heavenly rolls shall be completed, not one member being wanting in the mystical body of Christ! If now it be so "pleasant to behold brethren dwell together in unity" on earth, how much more to behold the perfect unity of the concordant, heavenly society, when the prayer of Christ for them shall be fully answered, "that they may be all one in God and him." John, 17 : 21.

§ 12. Another part of the future blessedness of the righteous will result from the noble employment and work of the heavenly society. Angels and saints are frequently represented in the Scriptures as joining in joyfully celebrating the divine praises. See Rev. 5 : 8–14. 7 : 9, 10. 19 : 19. "Methinks," says the pious Mr. Baxter, "when we are singing or speaking God's praise in the great assemblies with joyful and fervent souls, I have the liveliest foretaste of heaven upon earth; and I almost wish that our

voices could reach through all the world, and to heaven itself. Nor is there any exercise in which I would rather end my life." And if it be so sweet to join in the imperfect praises of the church here below, how ravishing will it be to bear our part in the triumphant hallelujahs of the heavenly community. How justly may we say with the Psalmist, "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house; they will be still praising thee."

And no doubt there are various works besides, in which the heavenly King will employ all that are the happy attendants at his throne above. It is expressly mentioned as one part of the felicity of heaven, that "there the servants of God shall serve him." Rev. 22 : 3. And these services will be as much more honorable and delightful than those on earth, as their capacity and zeal to perform them shall be greater. But I proceed to name,

§ 13. Another part of the future happiness of the righteous, as resulting from the beauty and glory of the place where they shall enjoy it. The future habitation of the righteous is called by different names, such as the paradise of God, the third heaven, the heaven of heavens, a building not made with hands, into which our blessed Savior has entered to prepare mansions for his faithful followers; the Jerusalem above, a city whose builder and maker is God. "And if there be such a ravishing beauty," says Dr. Boyce, "in the accurate frame of this lower world; if this earth, which is but comparatively as the sink of this inferior creation, be full of the glory of God; what must we conceive that highest heaven to be, which is as it were the court of the eternal King, the place of his peculiar abode, and the seat of his glorious empire!" Well may it be called, "the heaven of heavens." To represent its amazing amplitude and splendor, he employs the lively emblem of his immensity and glory who dwells there, (i. e. there peculiarly manifests himself.) "and who would not long to see the

beauty and glory of God shining with the brightest rays in that eternal sanctuary! Who would not account it the highest honor to be admitted into the presence-chamber, and to stand before the "blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords!"

§ 14. To what has been said, my dear Benjamin, I will add but one thought more, viz. that the future happiness of the righteous arises from its duration. It is "*Eternal Life*," both without interruption and without end. It is an immortal crown, whose glory never fades; an "inheritance incorruptible," that suffers no diminution by the longest possession of it. There are none of those alloying ingredients in the heavenly felicity that abate and extinguish the pleasure of our sensual enjoyments. Glorified saints have no temptation to be weary of their heavenly work and joys, either from any defects in the objects they enjoy, or any weakness in their own perfected faculties. Their felicity is, in a lower degree, like that of its blessed author, fixed and invariable.

Thus, my dear Benjamin, I have endeavored to give you a description of the future happiness of the righteous, but let us be more anxious to realize it than simply to know it; may it be our felicity to know and serve God here below, and afterwards to be permitted to sit down with our venerable fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God; and join with all the redeemed in singing "the song of Moses and the Lamb, for ever and ever. Amen."

Farewell.

Letter V.

CONCLUSION.

Dear Benjamin,

§ 1. By the good hand of Providence I have been upheld and enabled to complete the series of letters on the controversy between our dear people and Christians. I have endeavored to lay before you the evidences which convinced me that the Bible, i. e. the Old and New Testaments, is a book of divine revelation, worthy of God to reveal, and absolutely necessary and perfectly sufficient to make us wise unto salvation, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I have given you an account of the necessity, appointment and revelation of a Messiah, or Mediator. I have endeavored to illustrate and confirm, both from the sacred volume and from the writings of our Rabbins, of blessed memory, all the prophecies contained in the law, in the prophets, and in the book of Psalms concerning the Messiah, and shown their literal accomplishment in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, both in his state of humiliation and exaltation. I have further detained you with several letters on the all-important subject of the divinity of the Messiah, and I hope that, instead of being "a stone of stumbling and rock of offence," it will be "for a sanctuary" to your precious soul. In conformity with your repeated solicitations and my frequent promises, I have endeavored to give you a brief statement of the different sentiments and opinions on the interesting but most difficult subject, the second advent of the Messiah, or the millennium, and have concluded the series by a few letters on the subjects generally called the "four last things," i. e. the resurrection of

the dead, the general judgment, the misery of the wicked, and the happiness of the righteous. I have also endeavored to answer the few objections which you have been kind enough to suggest, and hope that, instead of making an apology for troubling me with them, you will read over carefully the whole series in its connection, and let me know all your doubts and objections on the different subjects; and if life and health be spared, I will with pleasure endeavor to remove them out of the way of your embracing Jesus Christ as your Lord and your God. At the close of the first series I mentioned that it was my intention to add a few select sermons to this work; but as the matter necessarily connected with the one great object, the Messiah, has already exceeded the proposed limits, I must defer them until a more convenient opportunity.

§ 2. I cannot lay down my pen without addressing a few words to you,

My beloved brethren and kinsmen after the flesh. Although these letters are addressed to Benjamin, my natural brother, yet at no time during the composition of them did I lose sight of you and your precious souls; "for my heart's desire and prayer to God for you is, that you might be saved." And now, brethren, permit me to propose them to your careful perusal and attention; and after you have read them dispassionately and attentively, and properly reflected on the many and important truths which they present to your view, tell me candidly whether they do not clearly prove that Jesus Christ is the Messiah; not indeed such an one as you have figured to yourselves, but such an one as the prophets describe; who was to be born in Bethlehem of Judea, in an humble condition, "like a root out of a dry ground," to become "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," who was to suffer and to die, being "smitten and stricken of God, wounded and bruised for our transgressions, that by his stripes we might be healed."

It is an unquestionable truth, that you all expect a Messiah and Redeemer; you daily pray for salvation through him, and you have prayed for his coming for nearly two thousand years; but when the precious cup is presented to you, you dash it from your lips; when Jesus Christ appeared to our fathers, they rejected and crucified him exactly as it was foretold by the prophets, merely because he came not in the manner in which they had imagined he would come; and you my beloved brethren continue to this day to do the same. That our forefathers thus treated Jesus of Nazareth is to me no such surprising thing as it appears to others. I mentioned in a former letter, that but few of our nation in Christ's time had an opportunity of knowing the Scriptures, being then only in manuscript, and therefore exceedingly scarce. But how different are your circumstances! You have the means of obtaining a knowledge of the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament, none daring to disturb you. Compare then what I have written with the law, and the prophets, and the book of Psalms. If it does not agree with them, let the mistakes be publicly pointed out in the spirit of meekness and brotherly love, and I will give them all the attention in my power. But, as I have reason to fear that comparatively few of you make a point of searching the Scriptures, permit me to ask you, to what purpose do you imagine did the prophets predict so clearly and circumstantially the coming of a Messiah, and foretell every event that should happen during his existence in this world, and every circumstance of his birth, his mission and death, if not to instruct and prepare us to receive such a Messiah as God taught them to describe?

I cannot but hope that if you will candidly read and examine the prophecies that I have presented to your view, which you profess to believe implicitly, you will see that Jesus Christ is the very Messiah they speak of; he who

was in the world at the very time when the Messiah was expected to appear, and no other either at that time or since, proved to be such; he, who was born of the same family, and after the same manner, and in the same place, which the prophets foretold of the birth of the Messiah; he who taught all those truths and wrought all those miracles; he who suffered all those indignities; received all that glory, which the Messiah was to teach, perform, suffer and receive; whose doctrine was received in all nations, according to the character given to us of the Messiah; he was certainly the true Messiah; and it having been demonstrated that all these things were exactly fulfilled in Jesus Christ, and in him alone, we surely must acknowledge *him* to be the promised Messiah.

But if the prophets and the other sacred writings do not convince you, if you are determined to acknowledge no other Messiah but such as you have figured to yourselves, majestic and of resplendent glory, and will reject the true Messiah, the meek and lowly King of Zion, certainly nothing I can say will make a sufficient impression upon your minds so as to remove your fatal infatuation. Yet, such is my earnest desire to promote your spiritual and eternal welfare, that I would beg your attention a few moments longer. Suppose, for mere argument's sake, Jesus Christ to have been a mere man, and take his character as you find it, immaculate and replete with zeal for the service of God, and ever studying the good of mankind; who, after having taught a doctrine truly divine, was willing to confirm and seal it with his own blood; and exhibit to mankind, by his death, the brightest example of moderation, patience, charity, and many other sublime virtues; can the reason of the greatest sceptic withhold itself from believing *such a man*, one, too, of our own nation, not entitled to the warmest love and reverence? Surely not. We find the Grecians and many of the ancients worshiped the heroes

who, during their lives, possessed extraordinary virtues, and in the end generously sacrificed their lives for the good of the country; but when we read the sacred pages of the Old and New Testaments, and find the clearest and most evident proofs that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Creator of the universe; the object of worship of all the angelic hosts, who condescended to assume our nature, and make himself of no reputation; that he was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities; suffered himself to be led like a lamb to the slaughter; was numbered with transgressors, and poured out his soul unto death, even the ignominious and accursed death of crucifixion, to deliver us from the wrath to come, from the curse of the law, and free us from the tyranny of sin and Satan, to restore us to the image of God, and fit us for the enjoyment of eternal felicity and glory; what impressions ought such transcendent goodness to stamp upon our hearts? How greatly does it behoove us to offer up our most grateful thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for the inestimable blessing thus bestowed upon us, in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace and the hope of glory! I close, my dear brethren, with my most earnest prayer, that the God of our fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, would incline your hearts to read and examine calmly, and without prejudice, those all-important truths which I have laid before you, that you may be enabled to reflect seriously upon them, and finally be convinced, like myself and many others of our dear people; and thereby, at the coming of our blessed Savior, obtain the felicity of that kingdom promised to the believing Jews as well as Gentiles.

"Who is wise? and he shall understand these things; prudent? and he shall know them; for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them; but the transgressors shall fall therein." Hosea, 14 : 7.

§ 3. Christian reader—You who profess to know and believe that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the living God," permit me to close this letter with a word of exhortation. Let me recommend to you to read carefully and prayerfully the 11th chapter of Romans. Rejoice in the prospect of the Jews being grafted again into the good olive-tree, if they continue not in unbelief. "But how then shall they call on him whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" Rom. 10 : 14, 15. But who shall send missionaries and the means of grace to the Jews, if Christians do not? Consider therefore the design of the rejection of my beloved people, and your adoption in their stead. "For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy." Rom. 11 : 30, 31. Remember also, that "salvation is of the Jews;" "who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises, whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." Rom. 9 : 4, 5. Should it be asked in what way can we show mercy unto them? What can we do to convince them that Jesus is the true Messiah? I answer *for the present*, you may aid the committee appointed by the board of the Jewish Society to carry into effect their resolutions prefixed to this work; namely, to circulate it amongst the Jews in this country, and in England, and to get it translated into the German language, for the use of the Jews in Europe. For this purpose, a distinct fund has been opened, and donations are thankfully received by the treasurer of this society, Mr. E. Burrill, No. 5 Broad-street. To promote this good cause, I have offered to the Society

as many copies as they may want at cost, and should be happy once more to travel over the United States to solicit aid for this object, as I have heretofore for other objects. But I am now old and grey-headed; and with the loss of my hair I am losing my strength also, and shall have to spend the remainder of my days at home, in the publication of the Jewish Intelligencer.* But I hope many will send their mite to the treasurer of the Society, which will save traveling expenses. "And now unto him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

* NOTE.—A Prospectus of which will be found prefixed to this work, the first No. of which has just been published.

END OF VOL. II.

To the Editor of the American Baptist.

Sir,—Having had the gratification of perusing in manuscript the second volume of Joseph and Benjamin, I am constrained to express my sentiments of its merits. To those who have read the first volume, it may suffice to say, not only that it treats of similar topics in a like manner, that the plan there laid down has been completed, and the promises there made have been fulfilled; but, as these are deeper and more interesting subjects, they have been more labored, and deserve more the attention of the public; that they will find the relish they gained in the first volume, satisfied by a full feast in this.

I would say to those who have not seen the first volume, that if they wish to see the subject of difference between Jews, the sons of Abraham, and Christians, treated fully, clearly, and convincingly—if they wish to see the fundamental truths of the Gospel exhibited in the best manner, they will consult these volumes, equally beneficial to the Jew and Christian.

J. B. K.

Extract of a letter from James Millar, Esq., who acted as secretary for the London Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews, during the time that I preached the substance of these letters as lectures to my Jewish brethren in London.

"I have received your first volume of letters from Joseph to Benjamin, for which I sincerely thank you. They appear to me well calculated to excite the attention of the Jews; indeed, I always considered you as better qualified to deal with your brethren than most of our Christian ministers, in consequence of your general acquaintance with their opinions and the traditions of the Jewish fathers. Could we persuade them to apply to the 'Ruach Hakkodesh' for divine illumination in reading the prophets, with your observations, I should hope the veil that is yet on their hearts would be removed; it will be taken away in due time: your letters at the same time appear to me to be well calculated for the bulk of Christian readers, who appear to be too little acquainted with the prophecies relating to the future prospects of God's ancient people."

INDEX

TO

SUBJECTS.

A.	Vol. I.	Vol. II.
Abel, his sacrifice,	318	
Acceptance of Christ's sacrifice,		318
Adam how created,	47	
a federal head,	55	
his fall,	61	
believed in the Messiah,	156	
a type of Christ,	85	
Advent of the Messiah, first	179	
second		253
Advantages of the Seminary at Gosport,	14	
Altar of Christ's sacrifice,	360	
Angel-Jehovah,		155
his appearances,		157
Anointed, means Christ,	225	
Antiquity of sacrifices,	310	
Apostles, their character,		36
witnesses to Christ's resurrection,		ibi.
Arguments to read the Scriptures,	32	
Ascension of Christ,		61
Atonement,	325	
Attributes of God, incommunicable,		148
B.		
Benjamin's letter of inquiry,	7	
Bible, the only rule,	11	
why called Testaments,	20	
its evidences,	21–30	
examination of its evidences,	13	
Birth of Christ,	256	
Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost,		249
Branch means the Messiah,	426	
Burial of Christ,	392	
C.		
Cain, his sacrifice,	318	
Canaan, not yet fully possessed,		317
Ceremonial law could not atone,	114	
Change of human nature,	62	
called a fall,	63	
Character of the Messiah,	261	
Christ, why so called,	225	
God by nature,		123
possesses all the divine criteria,		191
Cock, sacrificed,	329	
Concluding letter,		385
Condition of the covenant of works,	56	
Consecration of Christ,	356	
Consequences if Christ be not God,		202
be God,		219
Contract in the covenant of redemption,	128	
Controversy between Jews and Christians,	41	
how to decide it,	43	
Covenant of works,	50	
nature of a	ibi.	
how made,	51	
Covenant of redemption,	124	
with Abraham not yet fulfilled,		285
Creation, an incommunicable work,		150
of man,	46	
Credentials of the Messiah,	268	
Criteria of Divinity,		142
Crucifixion of Christ,	382	
D.		
Daniel's weeks fulfilled,	186, 192, 225	
Death of Christ,	387	
temporal, spiritual, and eternal,	59	
Depravity, nature, proved,	72	
Desire of all nations means Christ,	189	
Destruction of Jerusalem foretold,	199, 296	
Deut. 18: 15–18 explained,	292	
Divine revelation, possible, necessary,	15	
Divisions of the Bible,	21	
Divinity of Christ proved from his resurrection,		54
its importance,		202
the Holy Ghost,		334
Doubts about the Bible,	13	
E.		
Effects of the fall,	67	
Elect, interested in the covenant,	142	
Elijah and John the Baptist,	275	
Elohim, plural,		131

	Vol. I.	Vol. II.
Error, duty of renouncing it,	11	
Evasions refuted,	202	
Eve believed in the Messiah,	156	
Events connected with the millennium,		282
Evidences of divine revelation,	21	
Exaltation of Christ, necessity,		
nature,		9
Examination of Scripture,	12	
Expectation of a literal return,		320
Extent of Christ's sacrifice,	366	

F.

Faber's sentiment of the millennium,		267
Faith the channel of salvation,		175
Messiah the object of		231
Fall of Adam,	61	

G.

Genealogy of Judah preserved,	239	
Matth. and Luke reconciled,	246	
General resurrection,		332
Genesis 3 : 15 considered,	150	
49 : 10 considered,	182, 221	
Gentiles to be blessed in the Messiah,	172	
German Neologists,	205	

H.

Hag. 2 : 1–9 considered,	187, 224	
Harbinger of the Messiah,	272	
Happiness, future, of the righteous,		373
Heb. 2 : 2, 3	182	
14,	375	
11 : 4,	319	
Heresy charged on those who believe a literal restoration of Israel,		326
Holiness enforced by Christ's resurrection,		59
Holy Spirit, his divinity proved,		234
Human nature changed by sin,	62	
its cause unknown without divine revelation,	62	

I.

Jacob's prediction, Gen. 49 : 10, fulfilled,	179	
Jehovah, an incommunicable name,		145
Jerusalem to be rebuilt,		323
Jesus, why called so,	218	
his human existence proved,	212	
he is the promised Messiah	212	
why rejected by the Jews,	45	
still expected by them,	232	
Image of God, what,	48	
Immutability, prerogative of God,	61	
Importance of examining religion,	8	
of the divinity of Christ,		202
his resurrection,		49
Imputation of Adam's sin,	83	
what it means,	ibi.	
proved,	84	
Inability,	105	
Inspiration, the work of the Holy Spirit,		249
Intercession of Christ,		76
Introduction to the Series of Letters,	7	
John the Baptist,	271	
Isaiah 11 : 2–5 considered,	263	
14 : 7,	243	
52 and 53,	341	
Judah, his genealogy preserved,	239	
Judaism to be re-established,		324
Judge of the world is Christ,		332
Judgment, general		348
Justification by faith only,	177	

K.

Kingly office of Christ,		89

L.

Law, positive, moral,	54	
Lawgiver,	185	
Letter from "Benjamin to Joseph,"	7	
circular, to omit things contained in the Talmud, &c. about Christ,	238	
Levi, David, quotation,	206	
Lying to the Holy Ghost,		249

M.

Man, his creation,	47	
the noblest creature on earth,	ibi.	
Malachi 3 : 1 considered,	190, 224	
Mediator necessary,	46	
appointed,	119	
revealed in Scripture,	120	
Messenger means Christ,	191	
Messiah promised, proved,	144	
expected,	145, 232	
revealed in paradise,	150	

	Vol. I.	Vol. II.
Messiah promised to Abraham,	162	
must have come,	179	
not concealed,	207	
his nativity,	229	
his descent, nation, tribe, and family,	234	
his character,	261	
credentials,	268	
his miracles,	277	
compared with Moses',	286	
to be a prophet like Moses,	290	
priest,	303 / 349	
his sufferings, death, and crucifixion,	282	
the Judge of the world,		332
Messiaship of Christ proved by his resurrection,		55
Millennium, difficult subject,		254
tradition of	200	
Miracles of Christ,	277	
Misery of fallen man,	97	
its nature,	98	
future, of the wicked,		365
Mission of Christ proved,	285	
Mosaic economy, design,	334	

N.

Nativity of the Messiah,	229	
Nazareth, Jesus called so,	218	
Necessity of a Mediator,	46	
Neologists in Germany,	205	
Newton, Bishop, on the Millennium,		256

O.

Obedience required of Adam,	57	
in the power of Adam,	ibi.	
insufficient to atone,	113	
Objections against the Genealogy,	236	
a literal restoration,		328
Origin of my conversion,	11	
our nation,	164	
the priesthood,	304	
sacrifices,	313	
Original sin,	71	
Observations on divine revelation,	14	

P.

Parties in the covenant of redemption,	125	
Penalty, none in the covenant of redemption,	142	
Perseverance of the saints secured,	139	
Persons in the Trinity,		124
Pharisee and publican,	320	
Philo, his character,		155
Place of Messiah's birth,	256	
Plurality in unity,		122
Predictions fulfilled in Jesus,	212	
Preparations made for the return of the Jews,		
Preservation of Israel,		318
Priestley's Dr., assertion refuted,	230	
Priestly office of Christ,	303 / 349	
Prince, is Jesus,	226	
Promise of Messiah not conditional,	142	
Promises in the covenant of redemption,	133	
Prophecies respecting the restoration,		285
Prophet, Messiah was to be a	290	
Proverbs, ch. 8 explained,	127	
Proposition respecting the Angel-Jehovah,		156
Psalm 22 considered,	340	
110 "	305	
Punishment, future		367

R.

Reading the Scriptures,	32	
Reformation insufficient,	113	
Religion, its nature,	9	
Repentance insufficient to atone,	106	
Regeneration the work of the Spirit,		243
Restoration of Israel,		281
Resurrection of Christ,		19
the righteous,		57
general,		332
Righteous, their character		375
River Sambatyon,	209	
Romans 2: 3, 4 explained,	176	
5: 12–19,	85	

S.

Sacrifice of Cain and Abel,	318	
Christ,	358	
Sacrifices, antiquity, &c.	310	
	106	
could not atone,	115	
	331	
Sambatyon, the name of a river,	299	
Sanctification as necessary as justification,	116	
Sanction of the covenant of works,	58	
Satan to be bound,		262
Sceptre means a tribe,	185	

	Vol. I.	Vol. II.
Scriptures how to be read,	32	
Seed of the woman means Christ,	152	
Abraham,	166	
Seventy weeks,	194	
Shevet, not a rod of affliction,	205	
fulfilled in Jesus,	221	
Shilo not a city,	205	
but the Messiah,	183	
Signs of Messiah's advent,		274
Similarity between Christ and the Angel,		180
Sin of Adam complicated,	69	
original,	71	
Situation of the Jews favorable to their return,		321
Spirit Holy, truly God,		234
Star at the birth of Jesus,	259	
Sufferings could not atone,	115	
of Christ described,	382	
vicarious,	339	

T.

Temple, second, destroyed,	186	
attempts to rebuild it,	228	
Temple, believers are such,		248
Tempter, Satan,	63	
his motive and subtilty,	64	
Ten signs of Messiah's advent,		274
consolations,		ibi.
Time of Messiah's first advent,	180	
Jesus came at that time,	221	
Two Messiahs, a Rabbinical fiction,	180	

U.

Unction of the Messiah,	269	
Union of the two natures in Christ,	230	
Unity of the Godhead,		129
Vicarious sufferings,	339–361	
Virgin, the mother of the Messiah,	240	

W.

World, what it means,	174	
Worship due to God only,		151

INDEX

TO

PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE

ILLUSTRATED OR QUOTED IN THIS WORK.

GENESIS.		VOL. I.	VOL. II.
Ch.	Ver.	Page.	Page.
1	26		131
	27		136
	26, 27	48	
2	7		132 344
	16, 17	54 88	
3	1–6	63	
	11		358
	15	150 167 302	
	16–19	102	
	22		132
4	2–6	318	
	4		78
	25	168 240	
5	22		68
6	5	77	
	7		168
8	24		61
11	7		132
12	1–3	163	
13	14, 15	167	285, 286
15	1	166	
	3	168	
	9, 10	51	
16	7–14		157
17	8		285
18	20–21		358
19	17	101	
	24		132 164
	32	240	
20	13		132
21	13	168	
	16		219
22	15–18	163	108 157
24	67	348	
26	3		358
	28–31	52	
28	10	347	
	10–22		157
	13, 14	163	
	22	240	
29	27	148	
32	24–30		157
35	1–7		157
	8	240	
	12		358
36	14		358
42	38		71
45	14	7	
48	11		68
49	8–12	182	
	10	184	

GENESIS.		VOL. I.	VOL. II.
Ch.	Ver.	Page.	Page.
49	18	145	
	18–28	185	
50	24		320
	EXODUS.		
3	1–5		157
	2 14–18		169
	7-10		321
	14		188
	20	285	
4	1 5		169
	21	285	
6	4 8		285
7	1		184
14	13		276
15	2	232	
	9		232
20	3		129
	5		137
	22, 23		166
22	2	236	
23	20–23		170 178
28	29		83
	41	358	
33	14, 15		177
34	2		92
	14		153
37	22 24		92
	LEVIT.		
9	32		68
16	15–17		77
	16		80
19	28		21
21	1		21
23	10–12		19
24	29	327	
	15, 16		206
26	42–45		285
27	28	327	
	NUMB.		
16	40		86
21	14	219	
23	8	100	
	19	208	
24	17	259	
	17–19		89

DEUT.	VOL. I.	VOL. II.
Ch. Ver.	Page.	Page.
1 8		288
3 16		169
4 7		158
23, 24		143
35–39		
5 26		
6 4		
6, 7	34	
13–15		143 153
17	187	
21		160
32		143
10 16	90	
17		187
20		143
11 21		286
16 21		143
17 18, 19	35	
18 15–19		227
18	271	
20 3–5		
22 28	243	
23 14		192
25 5		
27 26	57 99	
28	102	
15–20	100	
27	298	
29 14, 15	56	
29	39	
30 1–6		282 289 330
20		286
32 35		
39		345
34 10–12	293	

JOSHUA.		
5 13–15		157 170
14		160
6 2		157
22 22		138
24 19		176

JUDGES.		
2 1		170
6 11–24		157 170
13 2–13		157

RUTH.		
4 19	24	

1 SAM.		
2 6		345
10	289	

2 SAM.	VOL. I	VOL. II.
Ch. Ver.	Page.	Page.
2 26		167
6 2		167
7 12, 13	124 169	
12 13	108	
18 33		220
21 8	249	
23 3		96
24 13	162	

1 KINGS.		
8 39		149
18 24		171

2 KINGS.		
2 2		75
11		61
6 28, 29		288
19 15		161

1 CHRON.		
17 11		169
21 12		167

2 CHRON.		
26 10		299

EZRA.		
13 21		195
17 7		195

NEHEM.		
2 1 9		165

ESTHER.		
7 3		81
9 6		151
27, 28		166

JOB.		
1 10		117
3 17		377
5 12, 13	198	116
9 2		
8	78	151
14 4	75	
14	75	
15 14	140	
17 9	125	
19 25	146	
25–27	198	335 345
25 4		
26 13		240

JOB.	VOL. I.	VOL. II.
Ch. Ver.	Page.	Page.
28 12		131
33 4		240
42 8		87
PSALMS.		
2	120 214 261	
1–6		110 233
6	127 135	91 100
7	240, 241 262	190
7, 8	129	
8		77 97 107 259
10, 12		230
12		120 177
3 3		14
4 6, 7	19	
9 5, 6	376	367
16		351
11 4		246
14 1		129
7	146	
16 9, 10	397	
10	135	21
10, 11		13 345
11	69 141	70
18 2		150
19 10	33	
11	35	
22 1	385	
6 8 12	382	
13 16	382	
14–17	389	
15	397	
18	393	
25 3	140	114
24		187
10		167
11		62
25 9 14	97	
27 7–9		376
13		245
30 5	99	10
33 6		240
9	47	
34 10	142	
20	396	
40	131 366	
6	332	
6, 7	159	
6 8	128	
41 9	383	
44 21		194
45 6		233
7	134	
47 5		62 66
50 5	52	
13	358	
51 4		364
5	74	
12	90	

PSALMS.	VOL. I.	VOL. II.
Ch. Ver.	Page.	Page.
51 16		82
58 3	75	
60 16	134	
63 3	99	
68 18		103
4 8 17,18		187
32–35		166
41	249	
69 21	395	
72 10	260	
17	169 257	
18, 19		234
73 25, 26	140	
76 10		117
77 8, 9		376
78 17, 18		235
82 6		184
84 11	142	
85 12	240	
86 9, 10		130
11	39	
88 14, 15		376
89 3, 4	169	
19 22	134	
27		107
29 35, 36	169	
30 33	140	
90 2		192
11	99	369
94 9, 10		239
97 11		10
99	121	
100 3		106
102 25–27		98 192 194
28	158	
104 30		240
109 6, 7		362
110	121 214	
1	261	17 63 117 233 278
1–4	308	92
3	135 240	98
4	304	
118 18	32	129
22		22
119 56		116
126 6		10
136 2. 3		187
139 1–13		150 237
23		194
142 2	114 197	
145 17		97
147 20	37	
148 5	47	
PROV.		
1 22–27	127	
3 14	33	
33	19	

PROV. Ch.	Ver.	VOL. I. Page.	VOL. II. Page.
8	11	33	
	22–31		200
	23	127	
	31	128	
19	12	99	
24	17	357	
	12	360	
30	4		177
ECCL.			
6	24-26		136
7	20	78	
11	9		349
12	1		133
	14		349 352 357
CANT.			
8	6, 7		225
ISAIAH.			
1	5, 6	70	
	12	357	
2	17, 18 20		217
3	11		260
4	2	126	
5	20	117 124	
6	1–10		186
	3		138 167
7	14	133 153 244	185
8	13, 14		186
9	6	134 233 122	185
	6		92
	7	135	
	12		279
11	2, 3	134 262	
	1–7		92
	9		259
	10	184 399	
14	13		115
19	1, 2	300	
21	13	316	
23	24		279
25	8	140 378	279
	9	146	
26	19	136	23 111 337 346
27	3		115
	13		276
28	11	133	
	16	192	
32	15		22
33	14		367
	16	142	
34	16	35	
	18 20	52	
	32, 33	208	
35	5, 6	278	279

ISAIAH. Ch.	Ver.	VOL. I. Page.	VOL. II. Page.
37	36	297	
38	18		21
40	5		279
	11		98
	12–17		241 380
41	10		150
	18		278
	21–23		239 150
42	1	127	
	1 4	122	
	2, 3		98
	6, 7	129	
	6		180
	7	278	
	21	129 137	
43	5, 6	135	
	10, 11		129
	25		195
44	3		32
	3, 4	136	
	6		130 189
	22		194
	24		151
45	5		185
	6		130
	12		151
	18		194
	22		185
	23	136	325 356
	24, 25	137	
	25	198	
48	12, 13	152	189 250
49		122	
	8	191	
	10		278
50	4–9	136	
	5	128	
	5, 6	383	
52	7	273	
53		123	
	2	240	
	4	345	
	4, 5	387	
	5	131 132, 214	
	7	383	
	8	387	
	9	397	
	10	384, 385	
	10 12		17 78
	11	137	
	12	392	
54	10	125	
55	3, 4		24
	4	197	
	5	136	
57	8		575
59	1, 2	99	
	5, 6	312	
60	18		192
61	1–3	134	

ISAIAH.	VOL. I.	VOL. II.
Ch. Ver.	Page.	Page.
63 9		237 83
10, 11, 12		235
64 6	69	80
65 20–22		279
66 2	35	
4	197	
JER.		
4 4	176	
9 1–3	327	
10 11, 12		151
12 1–4	344	
15 16	40	
17 9	38	
9, 10		129 150
20 12 14	344	
37, 38	344	
23 5	126	
5, 6	233	72
6	137 148	79
30 9		304
17	240	
18		278
21	234	
31		85
31 21, 22	241	
22	153 244	
32 40	137	115
33 15, 16	126	92 145–147
16	137 158	
34 18–20	52	
44 4		222
LAMENT.		
4 10		288
EZEKIEL.		
11 19, 20	138	280
16 26	138	
20 38		275
21 27	183	
23 3	241	
25 14		279
36 25–28	139	293 330
37		297
11–14	139	
26 27	139	
38 6 8 15,16		263 299
22		277
39 2		263
DANIEL.		
2 34		118
34, 35		92
44		93
45		22

DANIEL.	VOL. I.	VOL. II.
Ch. Ver.	Page	Page.
5 6		351
27		358
7 13	308	
14	264	
13, 14		63 93 107
25–27		256 259 266
9 24	148 196 347	
24–26	312	
25	137	
25–27	194 225	
26	366	
11 1		274
44, 45		264 265 275
12 1		265
2		279 339
17		256
11, 12 42		266 275
13 10		275
HOSEA.		
2 13		275
3 4, 5	229	303
6 2		24
8 12	83	
12 1–5		157
13 14		344
JOEL.		
2 3		277
14		274
28		72 279
32		186
AMOS.		
3 3	49	
4 13		150
MICAH.		
2 13		64 278
4 1	154	
5 1	353	
2	256	93 192
7	135	
6 6, 7	331	
HABAKK.		
1 12	257	
2 2, 3	181	
ZEPH.		
3 9 20		278, 279

HAGGAI.	VOL. I.	VOL. II.
Ch. Ver.	Page.	Page.
1 1	249	
2	224	
1–9	187	
6	148	
7	184 189	
27	276	
ZECH.		
1 12		85
2 5		115
3 1, 2 5		82 362
8	126	
4 7	347	232
6 9-13	125	
12	240	
12, 13	305	
13		71
9 9	214 263	93 98 106
14		276
11 12, 13	384	
12 10	396	
10–14		313 329
13 1	397	
7	233 385, 386	
9		275
14 3		277
MALACHI.		
3	24	
1	191 322	
6	61	180
15		349
4 5	276	
5, 6	272	
MATTH.		
1 19 22, 23	243	
21	218	
23		185
2 1–11	260	
5, 6	257	
22, 23	261	
27	219	
3 1–3	223	
5	276	
16, 17	271	
17	294	
4 25	225	
5 19	59	
44	100	
6 44, 45	394	
15–17		347
33	106	103 231
7 14		378
22		362
8 29		178 357
9 4		193

MATTH.	VOL. I.	VOL. II.
Ch. Ver.	Page.	Page.
10 37, 38		224
11 2–5	44 181 235	
7–14	274	
9	275	
25, 26	143	
27		191
29		98 196
12 18–21	122	
25		193
31		249
36		357
39, 40		25
13 19	277	
31–33		119
43		13 342
42–51		368
15 14	18	
19	361	
16 16		178
17		189
26	10 165	
17 5	294	227
10–13	274	
18 18		95
20		192
19 17		376
28		355
20 28	364	
21 4, 5	263	
21 24	277	
43		111
22 21		97
29–32		335 337
37	58	
37, 38		196
23 17		197
24 30		355
25 31		355, 356
34 41		73 365
37, 38		373
41		347
42, 43		357
46		357 371
31–46		364
26 15, 16		55
64		355
62–66		112 204
27 43		55
52, 53		24
62, 63		26
28 18		17 97 107
19		136 181 196
19, 20		226
MARK.		
1 14		111
2 5–12		195
9 44 46 48		368 371
10 37		196

MARK.	VOL. I.	VOL. II.
Ch. Ver.	Page.	Page.
12 29 32		130
LUKE.		
1 10		79
26, 27	252	
30–33		94
32	124	
35		242
2 13, 14	259 286	
14		66
22		25
29–32	174	
34		186
3 3	276	
9 26		358
56		98
10 9		111
20		358
13 28, 29		367 342 344 347
14 26		186
16 26 28		360 366
17 20		94
18 31–34		27
21 24		324
36		356
22 29		95
32		82 181
23 34	100	
38		95
24 25–27		10
26		15
49		72
50–52		65
JOHN.		
1 3		344
13, 14	234	160 194
13		103
14		177
16	165	
17		181
20	276 332 365	
21	291	
23	233	
29	175	
45	212	
49		178
2 19		193
3 6	78	
13		192
14–16		219
36	99	228 378
45	334	
4 22	235	
25	147 291	
41		198
5 17–19		194

JOHN.	VOL. I.	VOL. II.
Ch. Ver.	Page.	Page.
5 23		196 224
17–23		193 203
22, 23		353
27–29		195 338.339 343 354
36	278	
39	40	
45	174	358
6 14	278	
14, 15		190
17 22	367	
42		242
62		64
69		188, 189
7 27	232	
31	279	
34		66
37–39		72
40	291	
8 21		16 66
24		228
41		190
56	145	
9 11	218	
10 10		378
11	360	
17, 18		26
28	115	
23–39		204
11 24		337
12 13		94
14, 15	263	
32		75
32, 33	390	
40, 41		186
41		236
48		358
13 1		68
7	1	117
18, 19	383	
19	28	25
14 1		196 226
13		80
13, 14		88 193
16		81
19		58 177
28		16
15 14		226
16 10		69
26, 27		79
33		344
17 2	373	95 97
3		378
4, 5		99
6		211
9 20		79
17		81
21		382
24		73 78 82
18 33–37		95

JOHN.	VOL. I.	VOL. II.
Ch. Ver.	Page.	Page.
19 7		206
19–22		95
34	397	
36	396	
20 17		64 75
31	285	226
ACTS.		
1 3		32
3 11 17		67
6		94
9–11		65
21, 22		36
2 22	286	
24		193
36		95
39		312
3 22, 23	294	
23	296	
21 25	169	
26		181
5 3		181
7		249
29–31		95
30, 31	211	
7 17		117
55		84
9 10		111
14 21		196
20		197
10 25, 26		198
36–40		54
42		352
43	169	
12 20		80
13 32, 33		21
45–47	174	
14 13–18		174
17		351
17 11	34	
28		129
20 28		102 230
22 16		197
24 15		342
25		348 351
26 8		244 338 344
17, 18		217
18		108
28 20		338
25–27		246
ROMANS.		
1 2 5		186
4		54 344
7		197
16	7	351
18 32	16	
20		151

ROMANS.	VOL. I.	VOL. II.
Ch. Ver.	Page.	Page.
2 5		359
11		362
7–11		363
12		358
16		357
3 5, 6		363
20 22	198	
25	364	
25, 26	359	
39, 40	174	
4 1–12	178	
20		57
5 5–8		220
7, 8	32	
10	363	10 82
12	59	
6 3–6		60
23	57	
31		79
7 18	73	
24		357
8 1		373
11		244 339, 343
23		379
28 31		116
32	166	231
33, 34		78 82 87
33–39		231
9 1–5	5	
4, 5	164	
5	234, 235	185
22		369
10 11	319	
11–15		196
12		207
11 16		20
25, 26		259
29	208	
14 9, 10		97 356
10, 11		185 352
12		349
17		103
22		356
16 24		188
27		185
1 COR.		
1 3		197
12		196
2 8		15 187
9	141	
10, 11		238
14	117	
3 16, 17		248
21 23		231
4 5		357
20		103
6 2, 3		356, 357
14		343

1 COR.	VOL. I.	VOL. II.
Ch. Ver.	Page.	Page.
6 19		248
20	304	
8 4–6		130
10 13		114
13	57	
10, 12		379
15 12–17		339
20		24
22	84	
20–22		339
24, 25		118
41		13
53		339
54	380	109
51–54		341 344
55–57	140 391	346
16 22		224
2 COR.		
1 22		81
3 18		379
4 4		232
14		343
5 5		73
10		334 356
14, 15		196 225
17		81
19	368	
20	338	
6 16		248
8 5		199
9		15 211
21		79
13 14		136 247
GAL.		
1 1		213
3 8	171 302	
8, 9	172	
8 16	153	
10	100 113	
13	99 101 364	
13, 14	171	
16	170	
28		207
4 4, 5	171 181	213
6 14	390	
EPH.		
1 6		79
11	45 142	
20		12
20 23	373	
21, 22		95
2 3	89	
12–19	172	
3 12		88

EPH.	VOL. I.	VOL. II.
Ch. Ver.	Page.	Page.
3 18, 19		221
4 8	167	70
8–11		72 187
10		16
5 2	358	98
25		181
25–27		185
6 10–18		105
PHILIP.		
1 5		231
2 5–11	16 17 95 100 120	214 219 354
3 8, 9		226
20 22		340, 341 343
21	13 58	193
COLOSS.		
1 13		103
16, 17		194 344
19	137 165 373	
19, 20	303	
2 9		177 191 230
14, 15		30 344
3 2		75
1–4		59
4		14 347
10	48	
16	35	
4 11		111
1 THESS.		
1 7		375
2 13	38	
14–16	282	206
4 16, 17		195
2 THESS.		
1 7–9	60	
1 TIM.		
1 4	245	
17		185 196 360
2 6	360	
8		86
8 16	234	58
4 8		116 231
6 15, 16		100
16		196
2 TIM.		
1 9, 10	137	345
3 16 17	36	249
4 8		348 356

TITUS.	VOL. I.	VOL. II.
Ch. Ver.	Page.	Page.
1 2	136	
2 13		185 348
3 3		111
9	245	
HEB.		
1 1		249
2		15
1–3		216
3		177 194
5		20
10 12		192 194
14		104 181
2 3		181
7		12
8		18 109
10		10 181
14 16	352 375	
3 2		15
4		151
7–9		235
4 9		258
13		360
4 14–16		80, 81 83 88 231
5 1	358	
5, 6	354	
20	366	
6 2		332
7 14	231, 252	
17 24		85
25		74 77
25–27		78
26	357	
8 3	359	
9 13, 14	333 361	231 236
24		77
25, 26		78
27		369
28	364	
10 10	360	
10–12		78
19, 20		88
27		116
11 6		345
17 22		
32	363	
35		347
12 2	377	70
24, 25		78 192
13 8		87 192
JAMES.		
2 10	57	
4 7		357

1 PET.	VOL. I.	VOL. II.
Ch. Ver.	Page.	Page.
1 3–5		59
5		82
6		114, 115
11	135 171	
15 19	364	112
20	127	
2 5		79
7		186
22, 23	394	
24	360 364	
3 11		196
18	364	244
4 11		196
5 10, 11		196
2 PET.		
1 4		81
21		249
2 3–7		351 356, 357
9 21		120
3 3–7		348 351
8		266
16		40
1 JOHN.		
1 7	71	82
2 1		74 77 84 86
2 4 10	364	
20		81
23		220
25	137	
3 2		14 341 379 381
8		217
9–13		228
4 8, 9 10		221
15		226
18		376
19		225
5 5		226
JUDE.		
1		115
6		357
13–15		352 355, 356, 357
24, 25		234
REV.		
1 4		136
5		69 196
8 11		189
18		13 17
2 8		189
10		117

REV.	VOL. I.	VOL. II.
Ch. Ver.	Page.	Page.
2 23		193
3 5		358
21		17
5 5	235	
6		78
6 9	365	
8–14		96 382
13		196
6 15 17		347
7 9, 10		196 382
16		341
8 3		79, 80
9 11	376	
11 2, 3		256
14		263
12 6 14		256
13 5		256
14 11		371, 372

REV.	VOL. I.	VOL. II.
Ch. Ver.	Page.	Page.
14 13		377
18, 19		117
15 3		103
17 12 14		117 187
19 20		163 174
11–21		99 108 187 258 382
20 7–11		262 355 357 367
13, 14		118 339 343
12–15		358
21 4		377
8 27		366
22 1	137	
2	374	
3		383
20		348

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